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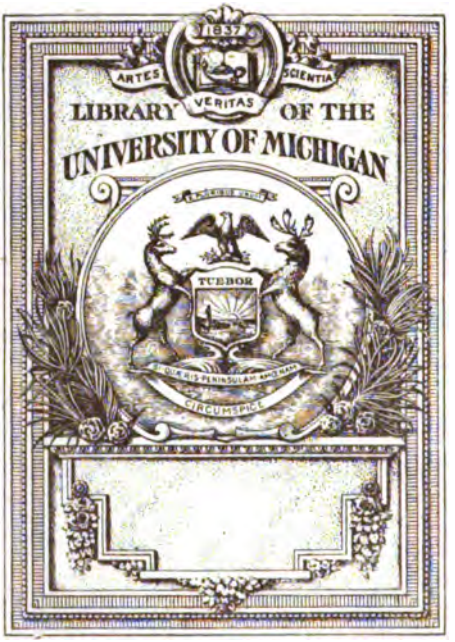
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THE

MONTHLY PACKET

OF

EVENING READINGS

FOR

Members of the English Church.

EDITED BY CHARLOTTE M. YONGE,

AUTHOR OF 'THE HEIR OF REDCLYFFE.'

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The Monthly Packet.

JULY, 1887.

BEECHCROFT AT ROCKSTONE.

BY THE EDITOR.

CHAPTER VII.

THERE had been no injunctions of secrecy, and though neither Miss Mohun nor Gillian had publicly mentioned the subject, all Rockquay who cared for the news knew by Sunday morning that Lady Merrifield's two elder daughters were engaged.

Gillian, in the course of writing her letters, had become somewhat familiarised with the idea, and really looked forward to talking it over with Kalliope, though that young person could hardly be termed Alethea's best friend, it was certain that Alethea stood foremost with her, and that her interest in the matter would be very loving.

Accordingly, Kalliope was at the place of meeting even before Gillian, and anxiously she looked as she said—

'May I venture—may I ask if it is true?'

'True? Oh, yes, Kally; I knew you would care.'

'Indeed, I well may. There is no expressing how much I owe to dear Miss Alethea and Lady Merrifield, and it is such a delight to hear of them.'

Accordingly, Gillian communicated the facts as she knew them, and offered to give any message.

'Only my dear love and congratulations,' said Kalliope, with a little sigh. 'I should like to have written, but——'

'But why don't you, then?'

'Oh no; she would be too much engaged to think of us, and it would only worry her to be asked for her advice.'

'I think I know what it is about,' said Gillian.

'How? Oh, how do you know? Did Mr. Flight say anything?'

'Mr. Flight?' exclaimed Gillian. 'What has he to do with it?'

'It was foolish, perhaps; but I did hope he might have helped Alexis, and now he seems only to care for his music.'

'Helped him. How?'

'Perhaps it was unreasonable, but Alexis has always been to good schools. He was getting on beautifully at Leeds, and we thought he would have gained a scholarship and gone on to be a clergyman. That was what his mind has always been fixed upon. You cannot think how good and devoted he is,' said Kalliope, with a low trembling voice; 'and my father wished it very much too. But when the break up came, Mr. White made our not being too fine, as he said, to work, a sort of condition of doing anything for us. Mr. Moore did tell him what Alexis is, but I believe he thought it all nonsense, and there was nothing to be done. Alexis—dear fellow—took it so nicely, said he was thankful to be able to help mother, and if it was his duty and God's will, it was sure to come right; and he has been plodding away at the marble works ever since, quite patiently and resolutely, but trying to keep up his studies in the evening, only now he has worked through all his old school books.'

'And does not Mr. Flight know I will help him?'

'Well, Mr. Flight means to be kind, and sometimes seems to think much of him; but it is all for his music, I am afraid. He is always wanting new things to be learnt and practised, and those take up so much time, and though he does lend us books, they are of no use for study, though they only make the dear boy long and long the more to get on.'

'Does not Mr. Flight know?'

'I am not sure. I think he does; but in his ardour for music, he seems to forget all about it. It does seem such a pity that all Alexis's time should be wasted in this drudgery. If I could only be sure of more extra work for my designs I could set him free; and if Sir Jasper were only at home, I am sure he would put the boy in the way of earning his education. If it were only as a pupil teacher he would be glad; but then he says he ought not to throw all on me.'

'Oh, he must be very good!' exclaimed Gillian. 'I am sure papa will help him! I wish I could. Oh!'—with a sudden recollection—'I wonder what books he wants most. I am going to Silverfold to-morrow, and there are lots of old school books there of the boys', doing nothing, that I know he might have.'

'Oh! Miss Gillian, how good of you. How delighted he would be.'

'Do you know what he wants most?'

'A Greek grammar and lexicon most of all,' was the ready answer. 'He has been trying to find them at the second-hand shop ever so long; but I am afraid there is no hope of a lexicon. They are so large and expensive.'

'I think there is an old one of Jasper's, if he would not mind its back being off, and lots of blots.'

'He would mind nothing. Oh! Miss Gillian, you can't think how happy he will be.'

'If there is anything else he wants very much, how could he let me know?' mused Gillian. 'Oh, I see! What time are you at the works?'

'Alex is there at seven; I don't go till nine.'

'I am to be at the station at 8.40. Could you or Maura meet me there and tell me?'

To this Kalliope agreed, for she said she could be sure of getting to her post in time afterwards, and she seemed quite over-joyed. No one could look at her without perceiving that Alexis was the prime thought of her heart, and Gillian delighted her by repeating Aunt Adeline's admiration of his profile, and the general opinion of his singing.

'I am so sorry you have had to give it up,' she added.

'It can't be helped,' Kalliope said; 'and I really have no time.'

'But that's not all,' said Gillian, beginning to blush herself.

'Oh! I hope there's no gossip or nonsense about *that*,' cried Kalliope, her cheeks flaming.

'Only——'

'Not Maura? Naughty little girl, I did not think she knew anything. Not that there is anything to tell,' said Kalliope, much distressed; 'but it is dreadful that there should be such talk.'

'I thought it was *that* you meant when you said you wanted advice.'

'No one could advise me, I am afraid,' said the girl. 'If we could only go away from this place! But that's impossible, and I dare say the fancy will soon go off!'

'Then you don't care for him?'

'My dear Miss Gillian, when I have seen gentlemen!' said Kalliope, in a tone that might have cured her admirer.

They had, however, talked longer than usual, and the notes of the warning bell came up, just when Gillian had many more questions to ask, and she had to run down the garden all in a glow with eagerness and excitement, so that Aunt Ada asked if she had been standing in the sea wind. Her affirmative was true enough, and yet she was almost ashamed of it, as not the whole truth, and there was a consciousness about her all the afternoon, which made her soon regret that conversation was chiefly absorbed by the younger ones' lamentations that they were not to accompany her to Silverfold, and by their commissions. Fergus wanted a formidable amount of precious tools, and inchoate machines, which Mrs. Halfpenny had regarded as 'mess,' and utterly refused to let his aunts be 'fashed' with, while Valetta's orders were chiefly for the visiting all the creatures, so as to bring an exact account of the health and spirits of Rigdum Funnidos, etc., also for some favourite story-books which she wished to lend to Kitty Varley and Maura White.

'For do you know, Gill, Maura has never had a new story-book since mamma gave her "Little Alice and her Sister," when she was seven years old! Do bring her "Stories they tell me," and "On Angel's Wings."'

'But is not that Mysie's?'

'Oh yes; but I know Mysie would let her have it. Mysie always let Maura have everything of hers, because the boys teased her.'

'I will bring it; but I think Mysie ought to be written to before it is lent.'

'That is right, Gillian,' said Miss Mohun; 'it is always wiser to be above-board when dealing with other people's things, even in trifles.'

Why did this sound like a reproach, and as if it implied suspicion that Gillian was not acting on that principle? She resented the feeling. She knew she might do as she liked with the boys' old books, for which they certainly had no affection, and which indeed her mother had talked of offering to some of those charities which have a miscellaneous appetite, and wonderful power of adaptation of the disused. Besides, though no one could have the least objection to their being bestowed on the Whitos, the very fact of this being her third secret meeting with Kalliope was beginning to occasion an awkwardness in accounting for her knowledge of their needs. It was obvious to ask why she had not mentioned the first meeting, and this her pride would not endure. She had told her parents by letter. What more could be desired?

Again when she would not promise to see either Miss Vincent or the Miss Hackets, because 'she did not want to have a fuss,' Aunt Jane said she thought it a pity, with regard at least to the governess, who might feel herself hurt at the neglect, 'and needless secrets are always unadvisable.'

Gillian could hardly repress a wriggle, but her Aunt Ada laughed, saying, 'Especially with you about, Jenny, for you always find them out.'

At present, however, Miss Mohun certainly had no suspicion. Gillian was very much afraid she would think proper to come to the station in the morning; but she was far too busy, and Gillian started off in the omnibus alone with Mrs. Mount in handsome black silk trim, to be presented to Mr. Macrae, and much enjoying the trip, having been well instructed by Fergus and Valetta in all that she was to see.

Kalliope was descried as the omnibus stopped, and in a few seconds Gillian had shaken hands with her, received the note, and heard the ardent thanks sent from Alexis, and which the tattered books—even if they proved to be right—would scarcely deserve. He would come with his sister to receive the parcel at the station on Gillian's return—at 5.29, an offer which obviated any further difficulties as to conveyance.

Mrs. Mount was intent upon the right moment to run the gauntlet for the tickets; and, had it been otherwise, would have seen nothing remarkable in her charge being accosted by a nice-looking ladylike girl. So on they rushed upon their way, Gillian's spirits rising in a curious sense of liberty and holiday making.

In due time they arrived, and were received by Macrae with the pony carriage, while the trees of Silverfold looked exquisite in their autumn red, gold and brown.

But the dreariness of the deserted house, with no one on the steps

but Quiz, and all the furniture muffled in sheets, struck Gillian more than she had expected, though the schoolroom had been wakened up for her, a bright fire on the hearth, and the cockatoo highly conversational, the cats so affectionate, that it was difficult to take a step without stumbling over one of them.

When the business had all been dispatched, the wedding veil disinterred, and the best Brussels and Honiton safely disposed in a box; when an extremely dilapidated and much-inked collection of school books had been routed out of the back-stairs cupboard (commonly called Erebus) and duly packed; when a selection of lighter literature had been made with a view both to Valetta and Lilian; when Gillian had shown all she could to Mrs. Mount, visited all the animals, gone round the garden, and made two beautiful posies of autumn flowers, one for her little sister and the other for Kalliope, discovered that Fergus's precious machine had been ruthlessly made away with, but secured his tools; she found eating partridge in solitary grandeur rather dreary work, though she had all the bread-sauce to herself, and cream to her apple tart, to say nothing of Macrae, waiting upon her as if she had been a duchess, and conversing in high exultation upon the marriages, only regretting that one gentleman should be a civilian; he had always augured that all his young ladies would be in the Service, and begging that he might be made aware of the wedding-day, so as to have the bells rung.

To express her own feelings to the butler was not possible, and his glee almost infected her. She was quite sorry when, having placed a choice of pears and October peaches before her, he went off to entertain Mrs. Mount; and after packing a substratum of the fruit in the basket for the Whites, she began almost to repent of having insisted on not returning to Rockstone till the four o'clock train, feeling her solitary liberty oppressive, and finally she found herself walking down the drive in search of Miss Vincent.

She had to confess to herself that her aunt was quite right, and that the omission would have been a real unkindness when she saw how worn and tired the governess looked, and the brightness that flashed over the pale face at sight of her. Mrs. Vincent had been much worse, and though slightly better for the present, was evidently in a critical state, very exhausting to her daughter.

Good Miss Hacket at that moment came in to sit with her, and send the daughter out for some air; and it was well that Gillian had had some practice in telling her story not too disconsolately, for it was received with all the delight that the mere notion of a marriage seems to inspire, though Phyllis and Alethea had scarcely been seen at Silverfold before they had gone to India with their father.

Miss Hacket had to be content with the names before she hastened up to the patient; but Miss Vincent walked back through the paddock with Gillian, talking over what was more personally interesting to the governess, the success of her own pupils, scattered

as they were, and comparing notes upon Mysie's letters. One of these Miss Vincent had just received by the second post, having been written to announce the great news, and it continued in true Mysie fashion.

'Cousin Rotherwood knows all about them, and says they will have a famous set of belongings. He will take me to see some of them if we go to London before mamma comes home. Bernard Underwood's sister is married to Mr. Grimstead, the sculptor who did the statue of Mercy at the Gate that Harry gave a photograph of to mamma, and she paints pictures herself. I want to see them; but I do not know whether we shall stay in London, for they do not think it agrees with Fly. I do more lessons than she does now, and I have read through all *Autour de mon Jardin*. I have a letter from Dolores too, and she thinks that Aunt Phyllis and all are coming home to make a visit in England for Uncle Harry to see his father, and she wishes very much that they would bring her; but it is not to be talked about for fear they should be hindered, and old Dr. May hear of it and be disappointed, but you won't see any one to tell.'

'There, what have I done?' exclaimed Miss Vincent, in dismay. 'But I had only just got the letter, and had barely glanced through it.'

'Besides, who would have thought of Mysie having any secrets?' said Gillian.

'After all, I suppose no harm is done; for you can't have any other connection with these Mays.'

'Oh yes, there will be; for I believe a brother of this man of Phyllis's married one of the Miss Mays, and I suppose we shall have to get mixed up with the whole lot. How I do hate strangers! But I'll take care, Miss Vincent, indeed I will. One is not bound to tell one's aunts everything like one's mother.'

'No,' said Miss Vincent, decidedly; 'especially when it is another person's secret betrayed through inadvertence.' Perhaps she thought Gillian looked dangerously gratified, for she added: "However, you know poor Dolores did not find secrecy answer.'

'Oh, there are secrets and secrets, and aunts and aunts!' said Gillian. 'Dolores had no mother.'

'It makes a difference,' said Miss Vincent. 'I should never ask you to conceal anything from Lady Merrifield. Besides, this is not a matter of conduct, only a report.'

Gillian would not pursue the subject. Perhaps she was a little disingenuous with her conscience, for she wanted to carry off the impression that Miss Vincent had pronounced concealment from her aunts to be justifiable; and she knew at the bottom of her heart that her governess would condemn a habit of secret intimacy with any one being carried on without the knowledge of her hostess and guardian for the time being, above all when it was only a matter of waiting.

It is a fine thing for self-satisfaction to get an opinion without telling the whole of the facts of the case, and Gillian went home in high spirits, considerably encumbered with parcels, and surprising Mrs. Mount by insisting that two separate packages should be made of the books.

Kalliope and Alexis were both awaiting her at the station, their gratitude unbounded, and finding useful vent by the latter fetching a cab and handing in the goods.

It was worth something to see how happy the brother and sister looked, as they went off in the gaslight, the one with the big brown paper parcel, the other with the basket of fruit and flowers; and Gillian's explanation to Mrs. Mount that they were old friends of her soldiering days was quite satisfactory.

There was a grand unpacking. Aunt Ada was pleased with the late roses, and Aunt Jane that there had been a recollection of Lilian Giles, to whom she had thought her niece far too indifferent. Valetta fondled the flowers, and was gratified to hear of the ardent affection of the Begum and the health of Rigdum, though Gillian was forced to confess that she had not transferred to him the kiss that she had been commissioned to convey. Nobody was disappointed except Fergus, who could not but vituperate the housemaids for the destruction of his new patent guillotine for mice, which was to have been introduced to Clement Varley. To be sure it would hardly ever act, and had never cut off the head of anything save a dandelion; but that was a trifling consideration.

A letter from Mysie was awaiting Gillian, not lengthy, for there was a long interval between Mysie's brains and her pen, and saying nothing about the New Zealand report. The selection of lace was much approved, and the next day there was to be an expedition to endeavour to get the veil matched as nearly as possible. The only dangerous moment was at breakfast the next day, when Miss Mohun said—

'Fanny was delighted with Silverfold. Macrae seems to have been the point of politeness to her.'

'She must come when the house is alive again,' said Gillian. 'What would she think of it then?'

'Oh! that would be perfectly delicious,' cried Valetta. 'She would see Begum and Rigdum——'

'And I could show her how to work the lawn cutter,' added Fergus—

'By-the-by,' said Aunt Jane, 'whom have you been lending books to?'

'Oh! to the Whites,' said Gillian, colouring, as she felt more than she could wish. 'There were some old school books that I thought would be useful to them, and I was sure mamma would like them to have some flowers and fruit.'

She felt herself very candid; but why would Aunt Jane look at those tell-tale cheeks.

Sunday was wet, or rather 'misty moisty,' with a raw sea-fog overhanging everything, not bad enough, however, to keep any one except Aunt Ada from church or school, though she decidedly remonstrated against Gillian's going out for her wandering in the garden in such weather; and, if she had been like the other aunt, might almost have been convinced that such determination must be for an object. However, Gillian encountered the fog in vain, though she walked up and down the path till her clothes were quite limp and flabby with damp. All the view that rewarded her was the outline of the shrubs looming through the mist like distant forests as mountains. Moreover, she got a scolding from Aunt Ada, who met her coming in, and was horrified at the misty atmosphere which she was said to have brought in, and insisted on her going at once to change her dress, and staying by the fireside all the rest of the afternoon.

'I cannot think what makes her so eager about going out in the afternoon,' said the younger aunt to the elder. 'It is impossible that she can have any reason for it.'

'Only Sunday restlessness,' said Miss Mohun, 'added to the reckless folly of the "*Bachfisch*" about health.'

'That's true,' said Adeline; 'girls must be either so delicate that they are quite helpless, or so strong as to be absolutely weather-proof.'

Fortune, however, favoured Gillian when next she went to Lily Giles. She had never succeeded in taking real interest in the girl, who seemed to her to be so silly and sentimental that an impulse to answer drily instantly closed up all inclination to effusions of confidence. Gillian had not yet learnt breadth of charity enough to understand that everybody does not feel, or express feeling, after the same pattern, that gush is not always either folly or insincerity, and that girls of Lily's class are about at the same stage of culture as the young ladies of whom her namesake in the 'Inheritance' is the type. When Lily showed her in some little magazine the weakest of poetry, and called it so sweet, just like 'dear Mr. Grant's lovely sermon, the last she had heard. Did he not look so like a saint in his surplice and white stole, with his holy face, and beautiful blue eyes, it was enough to make any one feel good to look at him,' Gillian simply replied, 'Oh, *I* never think of the clergyman's looks,' and hurried to her book, feeling infinitely disgusted and contemptuous, never guessing that these poor verses, and the curate's sermons and devotional appearance were, to the young girl's heart, the symbols of all that was sacred, and all that was refined, and that the thought of them was the solace of her lonely and suffering hours. Tolerant sympathy is one of the latest lessons of life, and perhaps it is well, that only

> 'The calm temper of our age should be
> Like the high leaves upon the holly-tree,'

for the character in course of formation needs to be guarded by prickles.

However, on this day 'Undine' was to be finished, for Gillian was in haste to begin 'Katharine Ashton,' which would, she thought, be much more wholesome reality, so she went on later than usual, and came away at last, leaving her auditor dissolved in tears over poor Undine's act of justice.

As Mrs. Giles, full of thanks, opened the little garden-gate just as twilight was falling, she beheld Kalliope and Alexis White coming up together from the works, and she eagerly met and shook hands with them. The dark days were making them close earlier, they explained, and as Kalliope happened to have nothing to finish or purchase, she was able to come home with her brother.

Therewith Alexis began to express with the diffidence of extreme gratitude his warm thanks for the benefaction of books, which were exactly what he had wanted and longed for. His foreign birth enabled him to do this much more prettily and less clumsily than an English boy, and Gillian was pleased, though she told him that her brother's old ill-used books were far from worthy of such thanks.

'Ah, you cannot guess how precious they are to me!' said Alexis. 'They are the restoration of hope.'

'And can you get on by yourself,' asked Gillian. 'Is it not very difficult without any teacher?'

'People have taught themselves before,' returned the youth, 'so I hope to do so myself; but of course there are many questions I long to ask.'

'Perhaps I could answer some,' said Gillian; 'I have done some classics with a tutor.'

'Oh, thank you, Miss Merrifield,' he said, eagerly. 'If you could make me understand the force of the aorist.'

It so happened that Gillian had the explanation at her tongue's end, and it was followed by another, and another, till one occurred which could hardly be comprehended without reference to the passage, upon which Alexis pulled a Greek Testament out of his pocket, and his sister could not help exclaiming—

'Oh, Alexis, you can't ask Miss Merrifield to do Greek with you out in the street.'

Certainly it was awkward, the more so as Mrs. Stebbing just then drove by in her carriage.

'What a pity!' exclaimed Gillian. 'But if you would set down any difficulties you could send them to me by Kalliope on Sunday.

'Oh, Miss Merrifield, how very good of you!' exclaimed Alexis, his face lighting up with joy.

But Kalliope looked doubtful, and began a hesitating, 'But——'

'I'll tell you of a better way!' exclaimed Gillian. 'I always go once a week to read to this Lilian Giles, and if I come down afterwards to Kalliope's office after you have struck work, I could see to anything you wanted to ask.'

Alexis broke out into the most eager thanks, Kalliope said hardly

anything, and as they had reached the place where the roads diverged, they bade one another good-evening.

Gillian looked after the brother and sister just as the gas was being lighted, and could almost guess what Alexis was saying by his gestures of delight. She did not hear, and did not guess how Kalliope was saying, 'Don't set your heart on it too much, dear fellow, for I should greatly doubt whether Miss Gillian's aunts will consent. 'Oh! yes, of course, if they permit her, it will be all right.'

So Gillian went her way feeling that she had found her 'great thing.' Training a minister for the Church! Was not that a 'great thing?'

(To be continued.)

DAGMAR.

BY HELEN SHIPTON, AUTHOR OF 'CAIRNFORTH,' ETC.

Dagmar, Day's maiden,—she that loves the Day,
The cheerful day, the light, the sun, the Truth.'—H. S.

CHAPTER I.

BEFORE THE STORY BEGAN.

'I wait for my fortune, the birds cannot sing it,
Not one as he sits on a tree;
The bells cannot ring it—but long years, O bring it!
Such as I wish it to be.'—JEAN INGELOW.

AT the first glance there is little difference between an evening in September and an evening in Midsummer, save in one respect. There is plenty of foliage, still green and luxuriant, though somewhat dark in tint, and there are still flowers, gay and plentiful, though not the 'flowers of middle-summer.' As for the birds, they are more numerous and light-hearted than ever, though for the most part they chirp instead of singing.

But there is one sign of autumn's presence which cannot be mistaken. It is but six o'clock, and yet the sun is low, just peeping over the low green hills, sending down the valley long shafts of mellow misty light that reveal the season most unmistakably. The long bright evenings, the nights that never were wholly dark, are over, and the summer is done.

It was a typical September evening, mellow and mild and still; and in the open park-like fields that lay round Winstead village and Winstead Hall it was still broad daylight. But in the deep plantations of oak and birch that bordered them on one side, it was already dusk—warm pleasant twilight—the air full of the delicious walnut-like fragrance of decaying oak-leaves.

A broad grass drive wound through the plantations, over-arched by spreading boughs, and soft and mossy to the tread, leading from the Hall gardens out into the high road that wound along the valley. The gravelled carriage-drive went down through the fields at some distance, and left this grassy avenue lonely and still, except for an occasional pedestrian.

It was not quite deserted now, for in the shadow of the oak-trees a

young girl was walking, slowly and alone. She looked very much at home there, and had good right to be at home, for she was the only daughter of the owner of the Hall, Geoffrey Tyndal, known in the village of Winstead as the Squire.

It was the fashion in the neighbourhood to wonder over the odd name which Squire Tyndal had chosen to give to his only child. The fact was, she had been born upon the day of a certain Royal marriage, and the Squire had been determined that something in her name should mark the date. And looking through the list of names borne by the family of the Lady who is some day to be our queen, he selected Dagmar as most uncommon and most in accordance with his taste. So Dagmar she was christened, despite the remonstrances of all her female relatives, and was never heard, as she grew up, to regret the name, unusual though it was.

Some one, when she was a child, took to calling her Day, and the name was so fitting and appropriato that it was soon generally adopted. A further attempt was naturally made to soften it to Daisy; but this would not carry itself out. Day she was, and Day she seemed likely to remain.

She was a tall well-grown girl, but she looked strangely young for her nineteen years. Her figure, though good, was youthful and undeveloped, with a graceful awkwardness common to young things that take much exercise and grow fast and freely.

Her face had in it the same promise of beauty to come, a fair yet rich complexion, ripe flexible lips, large eyes of clear blue-grey, and nose not worth mentioning as yet. Her hair was dark-brown, wavy, and long, and she wore it plaited in a childish fashion that accorded with the extreme simplicity of her dress. She was charming to look upon, and yet the common opinion of her looks was not, 'How beautiful she is!' but, 'What a magnificent creature she will be.' Only those who loved her would have been well content if she could have remained as she was, more child than woman, for ever.

She was sauntering slowly along in the gathering dusk, with eyes sometimes bent upon the ground, sometimes raised to the reddening sky that showed between the thick oak-branches. Her hands were sometimes hanging beside her, sometimes clasped behind her head, and her mobile face was grave and full of dreams—more childish-looking so, perhaps, than when it was awake and full of life.

Every now and then she lifted her head and broke forth into soft half-uttered song, most often only a couplet or a single line, thrown out with all the careless ease of one who had a bird-soul, and found song as easy and as natural as speech. Her's was one of those voices which do not require much cultivation, neither greatly repay it. It was of moderate compass, and no notes in it would ever have brought down an admiring house; but it was very reasonably powerful, and every note in it was full, pure, and musical, fit for the expression of any emotion. And she sang as the birds do, wild wood notes that leapt

into being with the feeling of the moment and died with it—music that seemed to be born of the quaint words she sang, and to have no existence apart from them.

She sang, indeed, fully as much as she spoke, and often expressed feelings in that way, which she could never have put into spoken words.

What was she thinking of as she moved along with careless freedom beneath the cool tree-shadows, solacing her solitude with snatches of song? It would be hard to say. The scents of spring flowers are not more fugitive and indefinable than the thoughts of one so young in soul as she, one for whom 'The Story' is not yet begun.

Thoughts of yesterday's small dainty enjoyments, which to-day were like dead rose-leaves; butterfly hopes for the future, which reached forward to all pleasant things, and in spirit possessed them already; and beneath and beyond all, a dim undefined longing for The Story to begin. The Story of Life, of that vague, unknown future for which we wait—knowing not whether it shall be of joy or sorrow—equally anxious for it to come, whether we hope for the one or fear the other.

It would not be said of Dagmar Tyndal that she either hoped or feared. She *knew*, by a prophetic instinct, that she should drink deep of joy, and she was by no means unwilling to taste of sorrow as well. She might even have been a little disappointed could some fortune-teller have assured her that she should go from the cradle to the grave without one sip of sorrow's strong rough wine. What life is complete without what that magic draught alone can teach?—and her courageous young spirit was anxious above all things to *live*, not so much to enjoy life, as to know the depths of all its mysteries.

Vagrant and dreamy as her thoughts must have been, they seemed to make her forget the flight of time. The heavy autumn dew was falling, the shadows deepening under the gnarled oak-branches; it was past six o'clock, and seven was the dinner hour at the Hall, and still she did not turn. She was by far too young to value her dinner as many people do, though she had a very healthy, unromantic appetite. Perhaps she would have liked best to have had a large piece of bread (or cake, since she had by no means outgrown her childish tastes), and to have stayed out there in the woodlands till the bats and owls were all abroad and stirring, and the great round harvest moon rose slowly above the tree-tops. But there are some rules of the household which even the petted and spoiled child of the house is not allowed to break; and when presently the great dressing-bell clanged out behind her, Dagmar startled and turned as at an imperative summons.

Noiselessly and swiftly, like a pale-blue ghost, she flitted up the long avenue, unlatched the gate at the upper end, and came out into the large, old-fashioned garden, where the air was heavy with the

scent of late mignonette, and the lingering roses and scarlet geraniums were mere blotches of milky white and intense blackness.

The Hall was a large, rather imposing-looking place, with fine stone-mullioned windows, rooms fairly sized, though rather low, and a beautiful deep stone porch leading into a large stone-paved hall. It had quite a festive appearance to-night, since every door and window was left open to admit the pleasant evening air, and the lamp-light streamed forth into the twilight, and seemed suddenly to deepen it into night.

A boy was standing on the door-step, a slip of a fellow of about twelve or thirteen, with a slender graceful figure, tall for his years, with regular features, and fair tumbled hair. As the light from the open door fell upon Dagmar's approaching form, he darted out to meet her.

'Day, Day, you'll be late for dinner!' he cried, exultingly. 'And didn't you know? Raymond's come!'

'Raymond? Oh!—Raymond!' she said, with a queer mingling in her tone of scorn, amusement, and a flavour of pleasant excitement. 'Raymond's come, is he?'—and she suddenly caught the boy by his two hands, and whirled him off to the smooth-shaven grass-plot in front of the house, upon which the two young creatures performed a most peculiar and ghostly kind of war-dance—very graceful to look upon, if the amazed spectator could divest himself of the idea that they were both mad. In a few minutes they came back to the house, panting slightly, the boy's arm round the girl's waist, their two faces looking strangely alike, both full of the same light of merriment and mischief.

In the hall Day caught sight of the clock, and started. 'Dick, you're dressed, I do believe, and it's high time I was. Let me go, there's a good lad,' and she slipped from his arm, sprang upstairs, and fled swiftly along a wide passage with a polished floor. She reached her own door, however, less quickly than her rate of progress promised, for under the swinging lamp in the midst of the passage she met some one whom she paused to look at, in complete oblivion both of her haste, and the need of it.

Dagmar was an only child, but she had the advantage of being on very intimate terms with many of her relations. The boy Dick, whom she had left below stairs, was her cousin, brought up with her, and more to her than many brothers are to their sisters, and here was another cousin who stood to her in the relation of an elder sister, though she did not spend all her time at the Hall.

Agnes Morrison was no longer in her first youth; she was eight-and-twenty, and she looked more. Some people were inclined to credit her with a former love trouble, to account at once for her being still unmarried, and for the slightly worn look of her face. Her hair was no longer so thick as it used to be, her cheeks were a little hollow, and there were permanent shadows beneath her fine brown eyes.

But if a love trouble was in truth the cause of this, many people would cheerfully undergo the same; if so they might be sure of the same result in *all* respects.

Agnes Morrison was more popular nowadays than ever she had been before, especially with the other sex—more popular, and even more admired. She had a beautiful figure, and she understood the art of dressing perfectly. She understood the art of conversation likewise, and could talk upon any subject to any person with an easy indifferent grace that left it to be supposed that she did not care greatly for anything on her own account, but was prepared to take an intelligent interest in it on account of others.

She stood now beneath the hanging lamp, in her faultless evening dress, with every adjunct perfect of its kind, and looked at Dagmar with a loving, amused smile.

'How nice! Oh, how nice you look!' said Dagmar, looking her over from head to foot, and walking round her with elaborate caution. 'I never saw that dress before. I took a flower to your room; have you got it?'

Agnes pointed to her hair, and her cousin nodded approvingly, slipped a hand into her arm, and sauntered with her down the passage.

'My dear Day,' said the elder cousin, 'you will most certainly be late for dinner.'

But Dagmar, with head turned over her shoulder, was studying the sweep of the other's long black lace train, and turned a deaf ear. Suddenly, on the broader landing at the head of the stairs, they came upon a young man, coming full-dressed out of his room.

His back was towards them, and the elder lady made no sign; but Dagmar cried out in her clear voice, 'Raymond, what a hurry you are in! How do you do?'

The young man started and turned round, showing a face less youthful than his figure had seemed—a face that could hardly belong to a man of less than five-and-thirty—rather handsome, but thin and lined, as if with a restless, active life. His dark moustache was thick and heavy, but his dark hair was wearing rather thin, and his eyes had lines round them that were perilously like crows'-feet.

'Ah! Day, I beg your pardon,' he cried; 'and Agnes, too! How are you both?'

They stood still together, greeting him smilingly; and he, beneath his gay careless greeting, was studying them both, struck, perhaps, by the contrast between them.

They were of nearly the same height, but in other respects the contrast was sharp enough. Agnes' beauty was set off by every advantage of dress—a pleasure to the well-trained eye from the topmost glossy thread of her hair to the toe of her dainty shoe. Dagmar looked as childish as even she could look, her hair hanging limp and damp with dew, and her simple cotton frock in the same

predicament. The freshness of the night was on her cheeks and lips—something of the wonder and mystery of the night in the depths of her clear grey eyes. There was nothing about *her* to please the well-trained eye—only a strange, elvish charm that made Raymond Dayrell, who studied German, and had some poetical fancies, think somehow of the Erl-king's youngest daughter.

He turned to Agnes with an air of quiet satisfaction, as if they had been old friends, as indeed they were.

'It is very long since I saw you,' he said; 'and my uncle did not tell me that you were here. This is an unexpected pleasure.'

She flushed slightly, and laughed a little clear laugh that had not one false note in it, and yet was not natural.

'My uncle told me that he had asked you to come and see *me!* I taxed him with having told a white fib, and he could not deny it—upon which I deputed Dick and Day to punish him. Shall we go downstairs?'

The young man bowed, and they went down together, talking and smiling with an air that seemed to be saying to the spectators who were not there, '*See how friendly we are!*'

And Dagmar darted back down her passage, singing as she went, so clearly and saucily, that they paused to listen. What did the foolish child mean?

'I have a house upon yon moor
(Lass, gin ye love me, tell me noo),
Three sparrows may dance upon the floor
(And I canna come ilka day to woo)!'

She banged her bedroom door upon the last word, and her two unseen auditors went on downstairs without looking at each other any more.

In the drawing-room the rest of the family were assembled: the ingenuous Dick, and the master and mistress of the household.

Geoffrey Tyndal was not tall enough for the typical English squire, but he was stout and comfortable-looking, grey-haired and brisk and lively; with brains enough to carry him comfortably through all the business of every-day life, and an amusing faculty for making blunders, and doing one thing while thinking of another.

His wife was a silent, somewhat grave woman, in looking at whom one might see from whence Dagmar got her promise of beauty; whose mission in life seemed to be to smile quietly over her husband's mistakes, and set them right, and to do kind actions for everybody.

She should have been a member of a working Sisterhood, instead of a rich man's wife, and possibly in that case she might have been an even happier woman, though such an idea would never have entered her brain.

Dick and his uncle were talking together with an eagerness and interest which showed that the elderly man had still the light warm heart of a boy. Miss Morrison went to Mrs. Tyndal's side, and so did

Raymond, who had not seen her since his arrival. He made his *devoirs* with the pleasant grace of one well known and sure of his welcome, calling her aunt, as he did Mr. Tyndal uncle, though in point of fact that gentleman was only his father's first cousin.

Perhaps he was rather glad to talk to her, rather than to Agnes, little as he would once have foreseen such a state of things.

Once upon a time, now nearly nine years ago, Agnes Morrison and Raymond Dayrell had been so much to one another that they had dreamed of being more still. They had been engaged to be married, and even had any one objected, there was no one who was in a position to prevent their doing as they pleased.

So engaged they were, with much mutual satisfaction, for more than two years. Raymond discharged the duties of an engaged man to perfection. He waited upon his cousin—who was in London with her maiden aunt whenever she was not at Winstead Hall with the Tyndal's—in the most exemplary fashion, brought her dainty littl offerings, and paid her every attention that the most *exigeante fiancée* could desire.

And she for her part was all that he could wish—not 'spooney'—not coquettish; a future bride such as a man might show to his fast bachelor friend or his rich and evangelical maiden aunt, with equal pride and satisfaction.

There was once an old farmer at a rent dinner who was seen to sit long after the dinner was over, imbibing light French wines with much apparent satisfaction. Some one, thinking perhaps that the old gentleman must be undergoing a new sensation, asked him how he liked the wine. 'Oh, it's well enough,' was the answer; '*but we don't seem to get no forrarder!*' That was the flaw in the matrimonial engagement between Agnes and Raymond. They 'got no forrarder!'

Raymond had many expensive tastes, but barely enough money wherewith to satisfy them. He had been called to the Bar; but though he had plenty of brains he was perhaps deficient in energy, for he certainly made nothing by his profession, and an old friend from whom he had expected valuable help, died (without having done anything for him) in the second year of his engagement.

Agnes had a little money of her own, but very little, not enough to have provided her dresses without the presents which she received from her aunt and her other near relations.

And how they were to marry, Raymond could not see. On the same income a man will be rich as a single man, and very poor as a married one. And poverty to a man like Raymond means degradation. He loved Agnes well, but not well enough to face poverty for her sake. What he would have liked best, would have been to go on as they were, to have a right to her friendship and interest, to dance attendance on her, and to be often near her, and to ask for nothing further.

But he had right feeling enough to see that this ought not to be, that unless he could see a prospect of marrying her within a reasonable space of time, he ought to let her go. Time was passing on, and every year seemed to show him more plainly the hopelessness of his position, while the only friend who might have been able to give him a helping hand, was dead. So he let her go,—very reluctantly, and with the same graceful considerateness that had marked all his conduct towards her,—but still let her go.

What she thought upon the point it was hard to say. Perhaps she did not agree with him, perhaps she would have come down to the poorest way of living in the smallest house rather than have given up her hopes. But what could she do? A woman cannot press a man to marry her when he laments his inability to do so; she cannot prove to him that he *has* enough to keep her on, if he does not think so.

So they took a friendly and regretful farewell of one another, and parted, and there was an end.

Time passed on, and Agnes lost her girlish bloom, and whatever pretensions to actual beauty she had once possessed, and ripened into a very charming and fascinating woman of the world. And Raymond kept his terms at the Temple, and went on Circuit, and danced and dined and visited at the best houses, and was as poor as ever, and shuddered at times to think in what a deeper abyss of poverty he would have been by this time if he had married. And certainly unless marriage had materially changed his tastes and habits, and aroused his dormant energies, he would have been poor indeed.

Meanwhile the ex-lovers, who could not avoid meeting occasionally, were supposed to have attained to a feeling of very comfortable friendliness. Their brief engagement was now so old a story that but few people remembered it, and far as could be judged by their manner they had forgotten it themselves.

If Raymond's pulse still underwent a thrill at meeting this woman who was at once so little and so much to him, it was no one's business but his own, for he concealed it very effectually. And whether she felt more, or less, or nothing at all, there was no prospect of discovering. She was not of the stamp of woman that needs a *confidante*, and it was many a year since any one had read any emotion in her face but those she chose should appear there.

The dinner-bell rang before Raymond had finished his conversation with Mrs. Tyndal, and it had sounded full three minutes before Dagmar entered, a little out of breath with the speed with which she had come downstairs. She went and stood beside her cousin, putting her arm caressingly round her waist, and now that she was dressed in a more grown-up and ambitious fashion, it was evident that they were really more than a little alike, after all. Their eyes were different, but their hair was of the same colour, and had the same becoming waves upon the temples, and their features were more alike than

those of sisters often are. Dagmar, in her present undeveloped state, was hardly so pretty or so finished-looking as Agnes had been at her age; but in ten years time she would be far more beautiful than Agnes had ever promised to be.

Raymond looked at them both together once more, and his brows drew together thoughtfully. He let his speech drop unfinished, and did not hear what his aunt said to him in reply.

'How Day has grown!' he said, abruptly, as they moved to go into dinner. 'Is she really two inches taller since I was here last?'

'Hardly so much,' said her mother, smiling. 'But she has grown to look more womanly, and perhaps that seems to give her height.'

She glanced back at her daughter as she spoke, and was inclined to retract the remark as to her womanliness.

The rest of the party was crossing the hall informally, sufficiently at home to be more intent on dinner than ceremony; but Dick was giving himself all the airs of a bashful but exceedingly proper young lady, and was being squired across by Day, who had given him her arm, and was pulling an imaginary moustache, and saying—

'Quite too splendid weather! Haw! Yes, cert'nly!'

Raymond laughed softly. 'How pretty she is getting!' he murmured in his aunt's ear as they passed through the dining-room door, and Mrs. Tyndal looked again at her daughter and more than agreed with him.

'Harvest is nearly all gathered in,' said the Squire, in a general sort of way, beaming down his well-spread table and carving with great velocity. 'Stay, John, don't be in a hurry with that plate. It's for Master Dick, and he's good for two more slices at least.'

'Are you up to Harvest Thanksgivings in this part of the world yet?' asked his nephew, in a somewhat absent fashion.

'I don't know. Old Smythe wouldn't have been, that's certain; and Layton hasn't been here a year yet. But I shouldn't wonder if he were to treat us to something of the kind.'

'And then Day will be up to her eyes in Church decorations. That's the paradise of a modern young lady, isn't it?'

'I haven't an idea,' said Day, with great coolness. 'But Mr. Layton and I are great friends, and if he tells me to do anything, most likely I shall do it.'

'Oho!' said her father. 'There's an admission to be made by such a self-willed young woman. I didn't know that Layton could come round the young ladies so easily. But the parsons are all good at that sort of thing.'

'Do you like Mr. Layton, on further acquaintance?' asked Raymond, who always kept himself informed upon local politics.

Mrs. Tyndal looked at the servant who was waiting, but her husband answered, quite oblivious—

'Oh, yes! well enough—very well indeed, I may say. The man's

a perfect gentleman; there's no doubt of that. But he goes rather too far and too fast for my old-fashioned notions.'

'In what direction?' said Raymond, lazily, watching Dagmar's quick graceful movements as she addressed some *sotto voce* remark to Dick who was by her side.

'Too high, too high,' said Mr. Tyndal, with a grave shake of the head, that certainly might have indicated a perilous altitude on the part of his parish priest. 'But we're not so badly off by a long way as they are over at Lynthorpe. That man there, Pymont, is a rank Papist I believe, only he hasn't the honesty to own it.'

'Not so bad as that, we'll hope,' answered Raymond, with that almost imperceptible smile which Agnes Morrison used to know so well. And then he relapsed into unwonted silence, while the others discussed local news with some animation.

Raymond was not often silent and dull as he was to-night, but the fact was he had been struck by a new idea, just in the moment before dinner, and he was now looking at it from all points of view, and still dazzled by its newness—perhaps by its brilliancy.

He had not lived for years the life of a popular man about town without having learnt that it is possible for a man who is good-looking and well-born to achieve matrimony even without money enough of his own to marry upon. Indeed, by many of his peers, to marry an heiress was considered the aim and end of their being. But Raymond Dayrell was unfortunately fastidious. The largest fortune could not have tempted him to marry a woman who was old, or ugly, or whose 'verbs and nouns did not agree.'

And even if an heiress in those respects unimpeachable had presented herself, the ghost of what he had felt for Agnes Morrison stood between him and a loveless marriage. He had honesty enough in his composition to feel that he had no business to take all that a rich woman could offer him, and not give her in return something of the feeling which had once warmed his heart.

So he had not seriously thought of marriage during all these years since he had broken off his engagement. But to-night, his eyes caught at once by Dagmar's budding beauty and her likeness to the only woman he had ever really loved, an inspiration had come to him. Why not fall in love with, and marry, Day? She had the fortune which Agnes had lacked, and in all other respects she might be Agnes' younger and fairer self.

Raymond had never supposed himself to be deficient in common-sense, and nothing short of absolute lunacy could excuse a man for failing to return to his first love in so prudent and agreeable a manner.

Yes, he would fall in love with Day as quickly as possible; study her character, and make as good an impression upon her as he could, and something whispered that a man of the world—good-looking, clever, and experienced in women and their feelings and fancies—could not

fail to win the heart of an inexperienced girl like his young cousin. He did not look upon himself in the light of a fortune-hunter. He knew that he had led a comparatively blameless life, and that he had no dark secrets to hide from his future wife. He could give her a good position, and introduce her to some very charming people; he could trust himself to be always courteous and kind, and above all, he meant to fall in love with her before asking her to marry him.

The new idea, perplexing but not unpleasant, engrossed a good deal of his attention, and left him but little to spare for the not very exciting conversation that went on round the dinner-table. Dagmar meanwhile was pouting a little. Raymond had called her, by implication, a 'modern young lady,' and she particularly resented the term. In the intervals of teasing her father, about some contradictory orders which he had given that day, she inwardly vowed vengeance, and even confided her intention to Dick, though not the mode in which she proposed to carry it out.

'Yes,' she was saying, when Raymond had put away his new thoughts in their proper pigeon-hole, and come back to the present, 'Yes, just imagine poor Holland's state of mind. "Meet me at the pond-head at five o'clock," papa said; "and be sure you go first to Netherton and call for the letters from the afternoon post." That, you will observe, was nearly half-past four; so poor Holland posted off towards Netherton, and when he had got nearly half-way, looked at his watch, and found that he had just time enough to get back to the pond-head by five. So he fled back, and the afternoon letters are at the post-office still! And there is one for me among them, I don't doubt!'

Her father smiled and pinched her soft flushed cheek.

'A love-letter, missie? Never mind, they'll keep.'

Dagmar did not blush. She laughed and drew herself up, like a child. Mrs. Tyndal supposed that her daughter at nineteen knew nothing of love and lovers, and ought not to think of such things. She gave her husband a glance of reproof and hastened to ask Raymond after some friends of hers who were living in town. Agnes listened, since these were her friends too, while Dick and Day and the Squire chattered and teased each other like three children.

Dick left the dining-room with the ladies, and Raymond and his uncle were not long after them. Agnes was at the piano when they came into the dim, rose-scented drawing-room, but she rose and left it immediately. And Raymond did not ask her to return. She might sing a song that was only too familiar to him—at any rate, her voice was too familiar; and he could not risk having his mind carried back too forcibly to the old life—on this night on which he had resolved that the new life should begin.

So he dropped into a place by Day's side and fell into the half-affectionate, half-teasing talk which he had always carried on with her from a child. But to-night there was in it a little touch of

sentiment which she could not but feel it was as if he had just discovered that she was a woman, and fair to look upon, and Dagmar was not sufficiently sure of that fact herself not to find the consciousness of it in others both pleasant and exciting.

'It is a long time since I have heard you sing,' he said presently. 'Come to the piano and sing something for me now.'

'I will gladly,' she said; 'but I can sing nothing but Jacobite songs just now. I think I have the Jacobites on the brain.'

'I do not particularly care for those songs,' answered Raymond, leaning upon the piano. 'I know it is high treason to say so, but the whole affair seems to me such a stupendous humbug that even the songs are only humbug sublimated into poetry. Sing that song that you were singing just now upstairs before dinner.'

'Upstairs?' said Dagmar, reflectively. 'Oh, I remember. But I know no more of that, only the last verse, and it runs like this—

'I hae a kebbock upon the shelf
(Lass, gin ye love me, tell me noo);
I canna eat it a' myself
(And I winna come any mair to woo)!'

'Raymond!'—looking at him with great solemn eyes—'do you know what a kebbock is?'

'No! I don't,' he answered, smiling indulgently.

'But I do,' she said, with a mischievous gleam in those clear depths. 'It is a ewe-milk cheese. And it is not large at all! It was odd that he should think he could not eat it all himself?'

Raymond's lips tightened just a little. He turned from the piano and affected to see that his aunt required something at the farther end of the room.

Dagmar looked preternaturally grave, and ran her fingers lightly over the keys. Raymond did not come back to the piano, and she went on singing softly to herself, running through the whole gamut of the Jacobite songs, from the warlike enthusiasm of 'Bonnie Prince Charlie,' to the heart-broken pathos of 'Will ye no come back again.'

'I am avenged!' she said presently to Dick, as that lively youth, who had been studying one of Marryat's novels in a corner, came and stood beside her.

'What did you do to him?' he asked, sotto voce. 'Did you put cobbler's-wax on his chair, or salt into his tea?'

'Neither, O vulgar boy! I don't exactly know what I did, or how I did it. But I gave him a prick in his feelings somehow, and I think he has not forgotten it yet. Come out on the drive, Dick; the moon is up, and it is so lovely. I should like to live out-of-doors.'

'You do, pretty nearly,' said Dick, as they strolled across the room together towards the French window.

As she unfastened it Dagmar turned her head, and glanced back towards Raymond, who was sitting silent beside her mother. Perhaps he took the look as an invitation, for he rose and followed her, stepping

out after her into the broad white light of the moon, and coming to her side in the most natural manner possible.

He found her very lovely in this fairy light, and unusually conversable also. She was a different being out in the still night from what she had been in the lighted drawing-room. She did not talk about ewe-milk cheese, nor let a little mocking imp look out of her eyes, but let Raymond lead the conversation to books and poetry, and listened, and even responded with a quick intelligent interest that made him wonder that he had so lately thought her a mere child.

He was beginning to think that the carrying out of his new project would be as delightful as the project itself was wise and advisable.

And Dagmar—if she had known that a man so much older and wiser and more experienced than herself was intending to fall in love with her, woo her, and marry her—would she have thought that *now* the story was really about to begin?

(To be continued.)

A PLUNGE INTO TROUBLED WATERS.

BY MISS C. R. COLERIDGE.

'Matter of course or matter of choice.'

CHAPTER I.

LAURA TERRACE.

A PLEASANT-LOOKING middle-aged woman was setting the tea things in a pretty, well-furnished sitting-room at No. 2, Laura Terrace. She was a fair-haired, fresh-tinted person, with a mixture of refinement and homeliness in her appearance; if she was rustic, it was the modern rusticity of the carefully-trained country National school girl, who, after country service in 'good' places, had made a happy and superior marriage. Mrs. Woodford had never known poverty. She was the daughter of the one shopkeeper and parish clerk of the village of Roseberry, and had married the Rector's gardener; who, after many years of comfortable and respectable service, had, at his master's promotion to a large London living, been passed on to a relation, who lived in a good house on the outskirts of Dulworth, a large town some fifteen miles or so from Roseberry.

The move was only just over and Mrs. Woodford had been settling herself and her family into the smart little town residence with mingled feelings, as she discovered, that, in gaining a drawing-room with a bow window, and one or two extra bedrooms, she had entered on a kitchen with a smoky chimney, an oven which would not bake, one cupboard which would not open, and another that would not shut. It was a very pretty cheerful sitting-room, however, with its gay carpet and muslin curtains, and she felt pleased at the thought of showing it to her husband, who had remained behind his family at Roseberry, helping his old master through the move.

Glancing out as she arranged her curtains, she saw his sturdy figure come up to the door, and ran out to admit him and bring him into the parlour.

'Well, mother, how's all with you? Bless me, this here is genteel enough for Lily herself! Are we to live here in a general way?'

'I don't see what else we're to do, if we're to be comfortable, the kitchen isn't what we're used to at all. But there, now you've come, I dare say you'll see your way to setting it right. How's the dear old place, and master, and the young ladies?'

'Oh, they went off pretty comfortable. Miss Alice she did cry terrible to say good-bye to Neptune, and he wouldn't eat a morsel of

supper. But Mr. Vicars' young ladies make a deal of him, and no doubt they'll make him comfortable.'

'And did you like Mr. Vicars?'

'Well, he seems a pleasant sort of gentleman. Not of course to compare with old master; but he spoke kind, and the new man looks respectable. He's to attend upon a pony as well as the garden, you know.'

'Dear old place! I wish we mayn't have done wrong in leaving it,' said Mrs. Woodford, wiping her eyes.

'Why, Susan, you know we talked it all through, how we'd outgrown the old cottage, and Mr. Vicars wasn't inclined to enlarge it. And master himself said I was worth more than he gave me, as I've got, and shall find it handy.'

'Yes; but when I think of our comfortable Sunday, and the church, and all——'

'Isn't the church here to your mind?' said Woodford.

'I don't know which church it is,' said Mrs. Woodford, tearfully, as she filled the tea-pot.

'Well, 'tis easy to enquire. Didn't you go to church on Sunday then?'

'I asked the baker at the corner, where I've been buying my bread—for as to baking in *this* oven, 'tis out of the question—and he said I should find the Congregational most popular; that was where he looked in of an evening. So I said we were Church of England, and ever had been, and which was the parish church? and he said the parish church was the one with a spire up on the hill; but he believed we were in St. Michael's district. So I asked for St. Michael's Church, and there—'twas nothing but wood, at the end of a new road, and bad singing—and hardly any one there but children, that behaved so as it was a shame to see them. And the clergyman, such a young gentleman, too.'

Woodford was not a man of many words, he nodded his head reflectively, and asked—

'And what have we got for neighbours in this Terrace?'

'The houses are not all occupied; but there's a talking sort of woman next door to us by the name of Mason, with children that haven't manners such as I like to see in mine, and she told me there's a lady further on with a little girl, that has seen better days and keeps herself very quiet. And there are some Irish which are Roman Catholics and have nine children, such as ought not to be in a neighbourhood like this. And a very decent-*looking* family here on the other side, and shocked I was to hear that the father brought up his children to no religion at all, having none himself.'

'There are such people, and many of them,' said Woodford, gravely.

'Then Mrs. Mason, she says, that at No. 10, there's a very pious couple, that have a room and hold a Gospel Mission instead of going to church, and she goes there to get a good word sometimes, though

she was brought up to the Church herself. And the old gentleman a the end is a Jew!'

'Well, there do seem a variety,' said Woodford. 'Have you found out where to send the children to school?'

'Well, most of the children hereabouts seem to go to a great school two streets off; but I can't make out whether it's a Board or a National—except the Irish, who go to a convent. And as for Sunday, I don't know if I shall see my way to sending them at all, things are so different.'

'Well, Susie! we've hardly had time to look round, we shall feel our feet by-and-by. It stands to reason that all the neighbours can't be Jews—and—and so on,' continued the good man with a disinclination to call his neighbours the names that naturally followed. 'But we all know there's differences, even in Roseberry, and a woman of your education will know how to manage.'

Mrs. Woodford *was* a woman of some education. She had been the favourite scholar of Miss Goodall, the Rector of Roseberry's sister, when both had been young and eager. She had read history and had been taught a great deal about the Church to which she belonged, so that she was an intelligent member of it. She had always been supplied with well-chosen books, and had, in fact, been educated to a full appreciation of the privileges which she had enjoyed. She was clever, too, and knew something by hearsay of the questions of the day, and had her opinions on them. Her religion, too, was a very real thing, by which she guided her life and taught her children to guide theirs, and the duties of which she never neglected.

But like many another of deeper and wider training, poor Mrs. Woodford had never known how much 'the Church' to her meant the actual grey tower and peal of bells, the well-known painted East window and solemn chancel, where she had knelt for nearly every Communion of her life, and most of all perhaps the dear well-known clergyman, always in his place, whom she loved and respected both for himself and for his office. She was home-sick and neighbour-sick to begin with, and felt as if her soul as well as her heart were torn up by the roots. However, being a cheerful as well as a sensible woman, she did not wish to welcome her husband by tears over what could not be helped; and was proceeding to call his attention to the less hopeless defects of the oven, when a rapid step came up the little garden, and a girl of eighteen or so ran into the house, crying out—

'Well, uncle—well, aunt, so here you are! And here am I, ready to come to you.'

'Why, Lily, I wondered never to see you on Sunday,' said Mrs. Woodford, kissing her.

'Oh, I'd been engaged ever so long to go and spend Sunday with Miss Brown, our first hand, and I thought you'd be all in a muddle. And we've been that busy with two weddings and a funeral that to

come after hours was impossible. But what a pretty room? And I declare, a row of trees in front, quite countrified!'

Lily Woodford was an orphan niece, who had been brought up at Roseberry, and after learning as much dressmaking as the village dressmaker could teach her, had been sent to improve herself at a large shop in Dulworth.

She was a very pretty girl with dark eyes, and a fresh colour, smartly dressed; but with the modest air of her careful home training, and to make a home for her, had been one great object in coming to Dulworth.

Having lived for some three months in the town, she was in every way prepared to do the honours of it, though she had lodged at the other end, and did not know the ins and outs of Laura Terrace.

'Schools?' she said. 'Oh, there's Nationals and Boards, too—and a British, which is more select. But the large one in West Street is the parish National, for I enquired on purpose. Churches? Well, at our end the music is best at St. Mary's; but there's a very moving preacher at St. Mark's, and Miss Brown and I like to go there mostly. But, dear me, over here nobody thinks of that stupid old St. Michael's. 'Tis St. Augustine's where it's the fashion to go. Such lights, and flowers, and banners! Sometimes there's not standing room. And its all free.'

Mrs. Woodford listened to this comparison with open eyes and ears, and remarked doubtfully, that she hadn't been brought to put her trust in flowers and banners—'nor even,' she added, as an afterthought, 'in singing.'

'Well—we had flowers and a banner too, sometimes at Roseberry,' said Lily; 'and it's the fashion to go to St. Augustine's.'

'Well, we shall attend our parish church, as we've been brought to consider our duty,' said Woodford, conclusively.

'Oh, dear me, uncle! No one thinks of parishes here; it's just as one happens to fancy. Ah, here are the children; have they been for a walk?' and Lily ran out to meet two girls of twelve and thirteen, a boy of ten, and a girl and a boy of six and seven, who, with an elder boy of fourteen—who was beginning work in a bookseller's shop in Dulworth—completed the family. They were all nice-looking children, fair and fresh like their mother, and greeted their cousin heartily; all having their different tales to pour out to her of the strange world in which they found themselves.

As the house was still far from fully settled, the remainder of the week was pretty nearly taken up with arranging it, and with settling in Lily, Mr. Woodford being, of course, occupied in his new garden. One bill of a Temperance meeting, another of a Penny Reading in the British School, an advertisement of a travelling circus, and a notice of a set of 'united services' in the Town Hall, were left at the door in the course of the week; the last left, as Alice said, by a very kind lady indeed. Mrs. Woodford laid up all the bills together

under the photographic album on the parlour table, and observed that her brain reeled at the bare thought of them.

A second Sunday, displaying the whole Woodford family twice in St. Michael's Church, produced a call from 'the very young gentleman' who there officiated, and who nearly thanked Mrs. Woodford for coming to hear him, though she was too simple to understand as much. He told her that St. Michael's district was under his charge, and had a separate Sunday-school, to which he cordially invited her children, big and little. The day-school belonged to the whole parish, and was in West Street, and offered every advantage. Mr. Anson requested Mr. Woodford to carry round the bag sometimes at the St. Michael's services, and was so cordial that, in spite of his youth, Mrs. Woodford felt more as if she knew which way to turn than before his visit.

She further received a note from 'Miss Alice,' announcing the arrival of the family at their new London home, and expressing such a sense of strangeness, and of longing for the dear old church and school and garden, that Mrs. Woodford had the comfort of feeling that she had a fellow-sufferer. She wrote back rather a forlorn letter, in which she endeavoured to make the best of things, the satisfactoriness of Woodford's new place, and the comfort of making a home for Lily and Robert, alternated with the damp which came through the bedroom ceiling, and the persistent smoking of the kitchen chimney. The clergyman, she concluded, 'though young and not what we are accustomed to—especially in his sermons—spoke extremely kind; and, dear Miss Alice, if we learned our duty in dear Roseberry, we must try and practice it elsewhere—for well do I remember the dear Rector's sermon when William Moffatt and his wife went to New Zealand, and he reminded us of the Communion of Saints, as distance made no change in.'

CHAPTER II.

GOING TO SCHOOL.

SUNDAY morning was fine and sunny, and Mrs. Woodford put on her best bonnet to take her children to the Sunday-school for the first time. 'As being,' she said, 'more respectful.'

'Dear me, aunt,' said Lily, 'there's no need. Hereabouts they go anyhow.'

'Oh, mother, we'd never be able to go into a strange school by ourselves,' said Alice, the eldest girl, timidly.

'*My* children shan't go anyhow,' said Mrs. Woodford, and a very tidy well-dressed flock they looked, all with Bibles and Prayer-books, and with both Collect and Gospel carefully learned by the elder ones, so as not to be behindhand with the probable requirements of the new school. Alice, the eldest, who was a gentle

tender-hearted girl, could not help a choking feeling coming into her throat as her prize Bible reminded her of the *old* school, and of the dear Miss Alice, after whom she had been named, and who had always taught her so kindly; and thought, too, of 'Granny,' who always stood out in her pretty garden to see them go by to school; and of her chief friend Rosa Beckford, at the village shop, by whom she had sat at school ever since she could remember, and with whom she had hoped to be confirmed next year. She was very shy, too, and felt that she was going to be exposed to a dreadful ordeal. Esther was a bolder, livelier girl, and more attracted by novelty, and by the hope of making friends with her future schoolfellows. Little Susie was wondering whether she would be put into the lowest class of all. Jem, the youngest boy, was no lover of schools old or new. Alfred, the middle one, was a sharp little fellow, on the look-out for any diversion. Robert did not confide his opinion on going to Sunday-school at Dulworth to any one, as, indeed, no one thought of asking it; but he looked, as he could do, rather sulky.

St. Michael's Sunday-school was held in a building that served in the week as an infant school to the whole parish; that is to say, the boys inhabited the infant schoolroom downstairs, and the girls a room above, where meetings and entertainments were occasionally held.

As they met Mr. Anson at the bottom of the stairs, Mrs. Woodford delivered her sons into his hands, expressing a hope that they would give satisfaction, and went herself upstairs with the three girls.

Here was a young lady taking some books from a cupboard, and about twenty or thirty little girls roaming more or less about the room.

'If you please, ma'am,' said Mrs. Woodford, 'I've brought my three little girls that I should wish might be allowed to attend the Sunday-school, which they have always done most regular. Their father is Mr. Clavering's new gardener at Glenrosa Villa.'

'Oh, we shall be delighted to have them here,' said the young lady, smiling, and proceeding to ask a few questions as to age and acquirements, and to take down their address; after which she motioned Alice and Esther to the first-class bench, and Susan to the fourth. There were only four classes, and a class of rather unruly infants on a gallery. Mrs. Woodford retired, a bell was rung, and the young lady read prayers; after which a variety of late-comers streamed in and took their places, and Alice Woodford, feeling as if she should sink through the floor, stood up to say her well-learned Collect to the superintendent who took the first class.

St. Michael's Sunday-school was a new experiment. Mr. Anson had represented to the Rector that he should obtain far more influence in his district and attach the people much more to the Church, if he could have the children, and especially his choir boys, in a Sunday-school of his own. He said that the National Sunday-school, as it

was called, was too large for any personal influence to be obtained over the children, and, moreover, he took the view, which had never dawned on the young Woodford imagination, that it was better to dissociate the Sunday teaching as far as possible from the week day-school and its teachers.

So as many children of the St. Michael's district as would consent to the change, and all the new-comers, were handed over to him; but as the teachers at the old school greatly disliked the new one, none of them would follow their scholars, and Mr. Anson had to collect a band from his own district who were still, like himself, in the stage of buying their experience.

Miss Walters, however, as the superintendent was called, was capable of giving a very pleasant lesson, and Alice and Esther prospered fairly well, though there was more whispering, and much less perfect repetition than they were accustomed to. Esther sat next a pleasant little girl with dark eyes, who showed her friendly attentions, and indeed the whole set, moved perhaps by the Woodfords' superior dress and appearance, were more civil to them than they themselves would have felt capable of being to strangers. They recognised also some of the younger Masons in the other classes, and when, after an amount of noise and bustle which greatly surprised them, they filed downstairs and set off to walk to church, Esther's new acquaintance sidled up to her and began to make friends.

In the meantime Robert Woodford sat at the end of a row of lads, rather smaller than himself, and contemplated Mr. Anson and the school at large. Mr. Anson was small and fair, with rather a nervous manner. Dr. Goodall, at Roseberry, was a tall powerful elderly gentleman, whose youthful feats of cricket and boating were traditionary, and who could have annihilated the faintest attempt at sauciness with one glance of his eyes. There were boys in Roseberry who gave trouble to their teachers, and it *had* once happened to Robert to be reported by the schoolmaster for throwing stones. But the remembrance of that interview in the Rectory kitchen-garden that 'Robert Woodford, what does this mean?' had never faded from his memory. Decidedly he never wished to hear it again.

But these boys were so inattentive and disobedient, they opened their Bibles with such an unpleasant bang, they rattled off the texts they were desired to find in such a rude manner, that poor Mr. Anson's lesson went out of his head, as he again and again reproved them mildly for their irreverence, till losing patience, he closed the book and rang the bell.

Whereupon the whole mass of boys, regardless of his calls to order, rushed helter-skelter out at the door, and Robert, running after his little brothers with a fierce desire to prevent them from disgracing themselves, was swept off with the current, and obliged to follow with the rest, who arrived at church, hot, disorderly, and extremely unlikely to profit by the service.

When the Woodfords reached home after the service, Polly Mason, a girl about fourteen, was standing in her garden. She nodded to Alice and Esther, and asked them how they liked St. Michael's School, Polly was so untidy, as a rule, that the two girls had not regarded her as likely to be a friend for them; but she was extremely smart now, and Alice responded—

'Pretty well. The lady was very kind.'

'Don't you go with your sister?' said Esther.

'No; there's nothing there but children, and I like my time to myself of a morning. I go to the Congregational in the afternoon.'

'But I thought you were Church people?'

'Oh! so we are. I mean to be confirmed next year, and mother attends no other place of worship, and looks in sometimes at Church when she aint too busy. But she says I may go where I like; she supposes one gets good everywhere.'

'What is it like?' asked Esther.

'What, our school? Oh, we have a lovely class-room, with chairs, and a table with a red cloth on, and ever so many prizes; and the treats are splendid, two a year, and presents.'

'What do you learn?'

'Oh, the Bible!—and Mr. Clegg expounds beautifully. You see I used to go to the National Sunday; but they're very strict there, no chance of any fun, and mother thought I was used bad about a prize, so, for a change, I went to the Congregational.'

'Are there treats and prizes at St. Michael's?'

'Oh!' said Polly, 'they can't afford much down there; but I heard tell of some entertainments to get money for one in the winter.'

'*We* had beautiful treats at Roseberry,' said Esther. 'Tea in the Rectory field, and such nice games afterwards.'

'Oh! tea and games? That's nothing—*we* have excursions. You'd better come with me. Mr. Clegg is always telling us to bring new recruits.'

Here Alfred called his sisters into dinner, and the conversation came to an end.

'Father,' said Robert, suddenly, as the apple-pudding was helped round, 'young Peters, down at our place, says I'm too old to go to Sunday-school in a town.'

'Do he?' said Mr. Woodford, with composure.

'Yes, father; he says there's some that goes to classes at the Christian Institute, and a lady here and there gets a few together; but he don't think much of that, and for his part he likes a walk on a Sunday.'

'Most lads do.'

'He was in St. Michael's choir; but he changed to another church because the pay was better, and now his voice is broke, he wants his liberty.'

'I hope he'll make a good use of it, my son.'

'The chaps were uncommon small this morning, father; and—and—so's the minister.'

'Now look here, Bob, my lad,' said Woodford, 'which that don't concern you. 'Twould not be manners to go off in a moment of time without giving your school a trial, and if so be that in a month or so you find it's not what you're accustomed to, I'll speak to Mr. Anson, and ask him to recommend a Bible-class or such that you can attend. But liberty, which means pipes, is what at your age on a Sunday afternoon I don't hold with, nor,' he added, 'expect to see.'

Bob subsided entirely, and Esther abstained from repeating Polly Mason's strictures on the Sunday-school, so that the whole party started off in excellent time after dinner.

They were consoled by observing a group of much bigger girls than had attended in the morning standing about at the foot of the stairs, while two or three little boys rushed noisily down as they went up to take their places. There was some delay in beginning, and Alice talked a little to a neat trim damsel, who told her she was in service and allowed out in the afternoon, and when Miss Walters appeared, and after the hymn sat down to teach them, she looked so kindly at her new scholars, that Alice's soft little heart began to warm to her, though she was considerably astonished at being praised for remembering clearly which of the Evangelists were also Apostles. What would Miss Alice have said if she had forgotten such a simple thing as that?

And how could Miss Walters allow those two big girls to talk to each other while the Catechism was being repeated. Why, they did not leave off when she said, with the most extraordinary mildness, 'Don't, my dears, I cannot hear the lessons!' Alice was sure they were at least thirteen.

Quiet was restored when a story was read aloud of rather a more secular character than the Woodfords were used to in Sunday-school; but then, as one girl said, 'We shan't listen, teacher, unless it makes us laugh,' perhaps that was inevitable.

Alice felt dismal as she walked home, and Esther remarked—

'Well, I'd like to see that Ellen Durham, or whatever her name is, at Roseberry.'

Their brother had had a more comfortable lesson, the class was small, and as, of course, Mr. Anson had plenty to say when he was allowed to say it, the excellent Robert could not feel that he was wasting his time.

Alfred found himself in front of a gentle-looking lady, who wore spectacles. Alfred, with the sharpness of the son of a gentleman's servant, detected at once that she did not occupy quite the same position as the ladies that he was accustomed to, and perceived also that she had no power whatever of keeping fifteen unruly boys in order. She had several little sheets of paper inside her Bible, and began to give a carefully-prepared lesson. Alfred was a clever child

and the description of the habits of Eastern shepherds interested him; but he speedily found that it was not the fashion to attend to Miss Brown. Nobody listened, nobody answered, the boys made dashes into other classes, and when Miss Brown, for about the twentieth time, remonstrated, a daring voice called out, 'We'll go up to Mr. Clegg's *next* Sunday.'

Alfred held his breath. Roseberry boys were not so immaculate as that burrs, cliders, and green apples did not occasionally appear there; but never had he seen these objects, or the behaviour which accompanied them, meet with any toleration at all. Instant confiscation, and a very unpleasant interview with some authority after school, had always resulted, and when Miss Brown only said, with extra mildness: 'I am sure—I am sure, Tom Peek, that you have too much attachment to your church to do that,' Alfred conceived a contempt for her, in his foolish little heart. She was fair game.

Little Jem meanwhile was one of a large class of little boys, who seemed to be rolling about the gallery, more like caterpillars than children, while their teacher, who was young, and looked, as she well might, rather cross, walked about and made occasional dashes at them.

Alfred was certainly not going to be the one weak-minded boy, who submitted to a weak teacher. If day-school was like this!

But it was not at all like it. Alfred found himself among an immense number of boys, some of whom were rough enough, but who were all under strict discipline, and had to work hard at their standards, and Tom Peek might be seen doing sums with lamb-like meekness. Alfred found himself of no account whatever, and not likely to be noticed unless he fell into disgrace.

The girls, too, found that the arrival of new scholars did not seem at all astonishing to Mrs. Trapp, the mistress. There were, indeed, several others, and no one took much trouble even to stare at them. They fell into their places, and found that their performances were similar enough to those of the other girls to pass without remark.

None of the family were very happy during those first weeks at Dulworth, and perhaps the father found the new life the hardest of all.

It was a great change to live away from the garden where he worked, instead of in it. He felt a stranger there, although he had a man and boy to work under him, was allowed to spend almost what he liked, and found his new master prepared to believe in his views, and to let him have his own way.

But his heart was not yet in his work.

'If I had only had the half of that there manure at home,' he thought, 'what a crop the old garden would have turned out! Old master, he were constantly mistook about the plants; but Mr. Clavering, he don't know enough to go wrong about them. Well,

master's got no garden up in London, and *he* don't complain; but all the glass here don't make up for it, nor two men, and a donkey to pull the machine.'

Woodford, moreover, disliked St. Michael's Church with all the loyalty of his country conservatism. He disapproved of the few particulars in which it went ahead of the older fashioned Roseberry standard, and he despised it for the many ways in which its struggling poverty showed itself. But the same loyalty made him believe it his duty to stick to it; and there he sat Sunday after Sunday, till Mr. Anson really believed that his sermons were exactly suited to 'that excellent fellow, Woodford.'

CHAPTER III.

A MODERN MAIDEN.

WHILE the father of the family slowly began to feel a personal interest in the vines and flower-beds of Glenrosa, and the children gradually shook down into their places at school, Mrs. Woodford still felt herself, as she expressed it, 'fairly bore off her feet' by the ways of Dulworth, and though, had she been a more ignorant woman, she might have fretted and pined more after the familiarity of home, she would not have been nearly so much disturbed and puzzled by the novelties, which she appreciated enough to dislike. When Miss Goodall, five-and-twenty years before, had met among her Roseberry scholars, with that rare creature, a girl with a responsive mind, she had poured out upon her all her own young enthusiasm, had made her read the books and the poetry which she loved herself, had taught her to believe in her own watch words, to worship her own heroes, and had, in short, provided her with an ideal, and a very high one. Neither girl had had enough experience to know how far the utterly unfamiliar teaching could be really assimilated; but they learned to love each other with a life-long affection, and when life taught them both to feel the reality of the truths which they had admired together, the teacher felt how much beyond herself had been the truths which she had taught; the scholar was grateful for having been taught to reverence what she now experienced.

When Beatrice Goodall had been laughed at for making the village girl, whose spelling was doubtful, and whose grammar was faulty, read and admire the 'Christian Year,' she had still further provoked ridicule by saying that Susan Lifford might be a very St. Margaret among her equals in Roseberry, and, far-fetched and romantic as was the comparison, it was not altogether untrue. She did guide her less-educated husband to a greater degree of refinement and a clearer sense of religion; she did bring up her children to something of her own superiority; she did set up a standard, and gave all the help of

a good example in the gradual raising and pulling up of the tone of the village. There are many such women in England, whose lives and examples will count high if ever Sunday-school teaching, and all the influence that has accompanied it, are 'paid for by results.'

Mrs. Woodford had rather a more intellectual turn than is common, and so had been able to receive and to pass on the form, as well as the spirit, of her young lady's teaching; but, of course, her knowledge could but be a path of light amid surrounding dimness, as far as her intellectual training was concerned; while her practical life had been particularly retired and simple. She had helped in the village school, learned a little of the village dressmaker, spent a few years in service at the Rectory, married the Rector's gardener, and had hardly passed a fortnight out of Roseberry in her life. She knew very well how to be a good Churchwoman, a discreet wife, a careful mother in her own village; but in Dulworth the application of her principles was very difficult.

In the first place, after a person has enjoyed a perfectly fixed social position on whatever level, it is perplexing to find it disturbed. Mrs. Woodford, like other mothers, wanted to cultivate the best society open to her for her children, and she was in the habit of thinking that people who earned good and regular wages, or were in small trade, were likely to afford it; but she was so dissatisfied with 'the ways' of all her neighbours, than she discouraged her girls from making acquaintances, and made them refuse the friendly overtures of their new companions. But over her niece, Lily, she had less control, and during the first weeks at Dulworth was nearer quarrelling with her than had ever been the case before.

Lily was a clever girl, and, belonging to a later generation, was much less rustic than her aunt in appearance and accent, could speak and write better English, and had, outwardly, assimilated more to the class above her. As she had been very carefully trained, she had more than is common of religious knowledge, performed her religious duties regularly, and, since she had been in Dulworth, had set up some religious opinions. But she was not made of the same quality of stuff as Mrs. Woodford, and she could not help being rather shallow. But a shallow brook may be bright and clear, and Lily had always been as good as she knew how to be. Was she to be swamped and swallowed up in the rush of many waters of the town life? On the same Sunday that the children first went to school, Lily announced that she couldn't put up with *that* St. Michael's twice a day, she should go to St. Augustine's.

'Tis the *fashion*, you know, aunt, and oh my! the lights and the singing are first-rate.'

'But, Lily, it's a mile down the town; you can't come back in the dark by yourself.'

'Why, aunt, I come back in the dark every night.'

'More's the pity. But that's not the same thing, Lily. The

numbers of idle young fellows I see trooping up and down the road of a Sunday is beyond belief; and it don't look nice to see a girl all by herself among them—no, nor two girls—even if you do call for Miss Dawson.'

'Aunt Susan, that's downright ridiculous. Every girl in Dulworth goes out by herself on a Sunday, and I'm not one to behave so as to be spoken to. I can take care of *my*self, and I've no friend at present I care to walk with, though—with a toss of her pretty head—'there's some that mightn't object to walking with me.'

'Oh, Lily, I hope you're careful!'

'Careful, aunt? Yes, indeed. I never make acquaintance out of doors, nor go out walking with those as are strangers—never.'

'I should hope not, indeed. But, Lily, besides the walking there don't seem to me to be any *principle* in picking and choosing where you go.'

'Principle, Aunt Susan? I have principles. I was brought up to church, and I never go to other places. And I like the high. I'm Ritualistic. That's a principle.'

'My dear, I should leave the calling of names to those as understand it.'

'But I do understand, Aunt Susan. Ritualists have flowers and crosses and singing and banners in church, and men and women sit different sides, and think a deal of going to Communion, as I'm sure, Aunt Susan, you brought us up to.'

'Oh, Lily, Lily, 'twasn't flowers nor banners that we were brought to think of with *that* at Roseberry.'

'No,' said Lily; 'I know it was different outside, but I believe the Rector was a Ritualist inside, as you'd say, if you heard the Vicar at St. Augustine's. He *do* move one, and make one want to come to church regular. And all our young ladies that are church go to hear him. Unless, to be sure, they think different altogether, and then they attend St. Peter's, which is a black gown, and young ladies to sing in the gallery; and you know, aunt, the Rector didn't like girls in the choir, nor to sing so as to be noticed.'

Mrs. Woodford was silent. Certainly Lily had never showed so much interest in church going at Roseberry, and she did not know how to express even to herself her feeling that there was irreverence, in all this surface chatter, however correct the principles might be which it expressed. How well she remembered the effort, the awfulness of her own first Communion, and how, when the number of Celebrations had been largely increased at Roseberry, how she had been afraid of coming often, for fear the only motive should be to please Miss Goodall.

But she could not express herself; and Lily certainly had the best of it in words; besides, nobody could say that the services at St. Augustine's did not do the girl good. As time went on she certainly took a great deal of trouble to attend them, and attached herself to a

Guild and Bible-class held in connection with them; both of which met with her religious and social approval.

She also joined a choral society, which met in the Town Hall once a week, and was, as she said, 'undenominational.' What denominations had to do, or not to do, with singing glees and part-songs did not appear; but this Town Hall Society was regarded as being more genteel and select than the parochial or congregational singing classes which met in the various schoolrooms and chapels, and was very popular with the young women in business, and with the clerks of Dulworth.

Mrs. Woodford did not know much about this institution, but she regarded it with a certain suspicion, as being the means of bringing Lily home very late at night, and as being the subject of mysterious allusions from young lady friends, which caused her to blush, giggle, and say, 'Oh, I never—how can you.'

Lily certainly had other acquaintances there besides young ladies; for she had tales to tell of the flirtations and follies of other girls, always ending with—'But dear me, aunt, *I* wouldn't do so for anything!'

'Well,' said Mrs. Woodford, 'I don't see my way to it.'

'Why, aunt, it's much better than the public-house.'

'Well, Lily, I certainly shouldn't expect to see *you* inside of a public.'

'No, Aunt Susan, of course not,' said Lily, laughing. 'But the young men—think of Bob in a year or two. Mr. Wattles, our president, says we're raising the masses, and that must be a good thing to do.'

'And pray, who's the masses? You and the other girls at Warrens'?'

'Oh, dear no! The—the masses are—well, I don't exactly know, auntie, but somebody below *us*, of course.'

'I shouldn't have thought you'd have cared about meeting people below you.'

'But we never do. Quite the contrary, aunt. But when we give popular concerts they'll come to them.'

'Mrs. Woodford here became aware that she was losing her temper, and stopped the retort on her tongue so very short off, that Lily was quite startled by her sudden silence.

The conversation had taken place on a Sunday afternoon when all the children were at school, Woodford indulging in dreams of future vegetable triumphs in the back garden, and Lily was putting on her gloves and finally 'prinking herself' before attending her Bible-class. She tripped off, thinking her arguments excellent; while Mrs. Woodford felt a dull sense of discomfort creep over her. She could only advise Lily, the girl earned her own living, and must not be driven to return to her lodging, by any ill-advised control. She could not exactly find fault with the Bible-class, or the crowded church, or the elevating singing-class, and yet she felt as if the way in which these

things were undertaken made them acts of self-will instead of duty. And all the good influences in Dulworth seemed to her to involve more risk than they were worth. She felt all this, but she was not at all sure that she was quite right in feeling it. Must she shut up Alice and Esther from all the interests of the girls around them? Or must she let them choose and chatter of one class and another church, till one was much the same as another to them. Then there was Robert, only held to the Sunday-school by his father's express command, while Alfred brought home tales of bad management, that she could not suppose to be the child's mistake or invention. Was it their fault if they didn't respect Mr. Anson?

Then all sorts of new problems came up for her decision. At Roseberry, every child who came to the school had been carefully taught that excess in drinking was a breach of the Baptismal vow, and that every Christian, every member of Christ's body, must be temperate in all things. But the modern, definite banding together against this special sin, had not, in the small well-trained village, come before Dr. Goodall as a necessity, and the idea was new to the Woodfords, and when on Mr. Anson's invitation they went to a meeting on the subject, they came in for such very strong language, and Mr. Woodford's daily pint was denounced with so much ardour, Scripture was handled with such startling freedom, that it was no wonder that they went home by no means inclined to any change in their habits.

When Mr. Anson called to learn their sentiments he saw that Mrs. Woodford was not pleased, she had not yet learned to *tell* a clergyman that she disagreed with him. He meekly apologised for the strong language of the deputation, and assured her that it was needful to 'gain the masses.' Mrs. Woodford said, 'Yes, sir,' and remained unconvinced. Robert, however, who was a well-meaning lad, fell in with an elder friend who assured him that to join the 'Young Men's Band of Hope' was quite the correct thing, 'being the duty of us, as are better than others, to set an example, and having the best treats in the town.'

As the Vicar of the parish appeared as one of the patrons of the institution, which was intended for the young shopmen of the whole town, and Robert's master was a staunch supporter of it, Woodford consented, and the boy became a very ardent member. It appeared to his parents that he brought home a great many new sentiments, besides objections to strong drink; but nobody could oppose a boy's enthusiasm against so great an evil, and his mother hoped it was all right; even when one night, coming home from shopping, she heard such a noise in the street as to make her say to herself that anything that stopped those poor creatures from taking too much must be a blessing. When, behold, as she turned the corner, it was only the "Temperance Errand Boys," as they were commonly called, coming out from their monthly entertainment.

As Mrs. Woodford thought of such difficult questions, and be it remembered, she had a mind that could perceive their difficulty, she experienced that sense of confusion and fret that comes upon those whose earthly guides are removed from them. The stronger the influence under which people have lived, the more this state of mind is likely to come upon them when they find themselves under new circumstances and strange leaders. Then the lighter sort get swept away in a stream of change, and those whose loyal natures make them cleave to the old standards, too often fall into a blind opposition to everything that seems new, and give up the old principle because a new person preaches it.

How often people who have loved and followed a favourite clergyman, give up the church system which he taught them to value, because his successor is inferior, or perhaps only different! Where feeling and principle have always gone comfortably together, it is a great trial of faith to find them separated.

Mrs. Woodford *could* not feel towards this new church, this new pastor, in the least as she had felt at home. That was her trial on one side. But the church training of Roseberry had been too deep and thorough for her to have any doubt that the church services and Sacraments had the same claim upon her wherever she might be. She was unhappy at this change, but she was not puzzled.

But, on the other hand, question after question came before her in this new wide world to which Roseberry habits gave her no answer, and to which she did not see how to apply Roseberry principles. No answer? Yes, there was an answer that came to her from that deep, old, careful training. When the collects had been taught so thoroughly to the Roseberry scholars that every one was known without the possibility of forgetting, they had been constantly taught that the lesson they said on Sunday was their prayer for the week, to be said daily, and to be considered as a guide appointed for their religious thoughts. Mrs. Woodford had said her collect that morning with her prayers. Now, as she felt herself all astray, she covered her face with her hands and repeated it again to herself.

'O God, forasmuch as without Thee we are not able to please Thee, mercifully grant that Thy Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.'

In *all* things, no matter how new or perplexing, God's Holy Spirit dwelt in her for a guide.

Mrs. Woodford cheered up and took courage, she did not yet see her way any plainer, but she felt convinced that there was a way to see.

(To be continued.)

CAMEOS FROM ENGLISH HISTORY.

CAMEO CCXLIV.

1661–1664.

THE AUGUSTAN AGE OF FRANCE.

THE young King Louis XIV. may have been said to begin to reign at the age of twenty-two, at the death of Mazarin.

'Transact your own business yourself, Sire,' said the dying Cardinal. 'Have no prime minister, such as your goodness has made me. I know by the things I *could* have done, how dangerous it is to raise a subject to such a position.'

This, and 'The State is myself,' were the maxims of Louis XIV. throughout his long life. No sooner had the Cardinal breathed his last, than the young King assembled the members of his Cabinet. 'I have summoned you,' he said, 'in order to let you know that though I have hitherto permitted my affairs to be managed by the late Lord Cardinal, it is time that I should govern myself, and you will aid me with your advice when needful.' He added that the Chancellor was to seal nothing without his knowledge, and no passport nor protection be granted without reference to himself, and he ended by recommending to Fouquet, the Superintendent of Finance, Jean Baptiste Colbert, who had been Steward of the Household to Mazarin. He was son to a wool merchant of Rheims, a plain homely-looking man, but perfectly upright and honest, and so able and acute in money matters that the Cardinal had said, 'Sire, I owe everything to you; but I repay you by giving you Colbert.'

Fouquet, of a good family in Brittany, was over the finances, Séguier was Chancellor, Le Tellier, an old man, was Minister of War, assisted by his son, the Marquis de Louvois; Hughes di Lionne, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, was the fourth Minister belonging to the Cabinet Council, for Louis was unwilling to admit more persons than necessary to State secrets, and was ready for any amount of personal toil. He was by nature methodical, and so stately as never to relax his dignity even in private. Mazarin had been accustomed to confer with the Council while dressing, often while being shaved, playing meantime with his monkey or pet red-wing, and sometimes rating his royal master like a school-boy.

Louis had submitted out of habit, but he altered all this, and though the Council still met in his bedroom, he was full dressed, point lace collar, ruffles, sword and all. He was the only person in a chair, though the Chancellor was allowed to lean against the rail of

the bed, and Lionne against the mantelpiece, and if writing was required, a stool was permitted to be used at the end of the table.

There could scarcely have been found five such able men in one Council all over Europe. Indeed, France was at this period extraordinarily fertile in persons of capacity. Turenne and Condé, the two greatest generals of the day, were in full vigour; Vauban, one of the greatest of engineers, had mastered a system of fortification which rendered cities almost impregnable, and his sieges were almost irresistible.

In peaceful architecture, Jean Hardouin Mansard was held to be unrivalled in stately combinations of symmetrical blocks, colonnades, and magnificent staircases. It is curious that he should have left his name to a garret, for he was the builder of palaces. He embellished the Louvre, but Louis never loved it, being unable to forget the scenes of the Fronde. It was on Versailles that all his care and cost were lavished, through the greater part of his life, and there he chiefly resided, only visiting Paris when it was unavoidable, and making Fontainebleau his hunting-seat.

The gardens of Versailles were laid out by Le Nôtre. They had perfect symmetry in trees, shrubs, terraces, parterres, lawns, and fountains, extending as far as the eye could reach from the palace windows. The fountains were by far the finest ever constructed, and the whole was adorned with a thousand bronze and marble statues and groups of mythological subjects, often portraying the King. The entire cost amounted to sixteen millions of pounds sterling, and though this was spread over many years, the expenditure rendered the King's buildings as burthensome to the people as his wars.

Lebrun was the painter of the day, but was not equally eminent in the eyes of posterity with the above mentioned, nor with the literary men of the time; La Fontaine, who shares the fame of Æsop and Phædrus as a fable writer in elegant verse, Boileau, the able satirist, and especially the dramatists. Corneille, though still living, had achieved his chief triumphs, under the wing of the Hôtel Rambouillet; and Racine, the greatest of them all, was still repressed by the stern scruples of the Jansenists. There were many lesser lights, all owing much to the Hôtel Rambouillet, where language and taste had been greatly purified. The Duchess had passed away, and had been aped by mere pedantic and affected imitators, who discussed literature in a weak and silly manner, held up to derision by Molière in his *Précieuses Ridicules*.

It was Molière who was in the zenith of his fame. His proper name was Jean Baptiste Poquelin; but as the drama was not held to be respectable, he changed his appellation. His comedies not only delighted his own generation, but still remain as classics, and their wit and humour charm and divert all times.

Novel writing had begun. Mademoiselle de Scudéry, who had written interminable romances, was in extreme old age, greatly

wounded by the irony of Boileau; but Madame de la Fayette, the friend of Madame de Sévigné, had written, 'Zaire,' and a more modern story, called 'La Princesse de Clèves,' was probably in hand, for these were long compositions, and were greatly polished, and read and discussed amid circles of friends before they appeared in print, with the royal sanction. The Countess D'Aulnoy and M. Perrault had discovered what a mine of interest existed in the old fairy tales, traditions of all nations, and wove some, gracefully told, into a long tale of nobles and princesses. She and her contemporary imitators gave Beauty and the Beast, the White Cat, Cinderella, Riquet with a Tuft, and others, that special form in which they have become classical. Altogether it was a time of unusual mental activity, and Louis, though ill-taught in his boyhood, privately studied to keep up with the times, and had the royal perfection of never being at a loss. On the birth of his son, he named as his governess the Duchess of Montausier, Julie de Rambouillet, one of the wisest and best women of his Court; and later he nominated as his tutor, Bossuet, the great preacher, most deeply respected throughout France.

Louis had something fine in his disposition, though education had done all that was possible to spoil it. He was far from unkindly or cruel, but self-worship often made him harsh, and his first victim was Fouquet. Mazarin had warned him against this superintendent of his finances, and when Colbert looked into the accounts, he found there was ample reason for the caution. Fouquet was immensely rich, but he enjoyed a fair reputation, and there seems reason to believe that he had done no worse than was the custom of financiers, and almost supposed to be their right. He had an excellent and devout mother, who was constantly praying that his worldly prosperity might not be his ruin, and he was a great friend of Madame de Sévigné; but the King was resolved on his fall, and all the more because he had bought and fortified the little Breton rock of Belleisle, an act sure to excite the jealousy of the Crown. He was Procureur-General to the Parliament, and this gave him privileges which rendered it more difficult to take action against him; but one day when Colbert and he were talking over the King's monetary difficulties, he proposed as a convenience to the King to sell the office for a million and a half *livres*.

The offer was eagerly accepted, but was far from softening the King. Nor was Louis touched by a wonderful fête given to him and all his Court at Vaux, a magnificent château, with gardens laid out by Le Nôtre, filled with everything costly and splendid, and everywhere decorated with squirrels—Fouquet in Angevin patois means a squirrel—and there was the Minister's 'canting' coat of arms, with the motto, '*Quo non ascendam?*' Louis looked at the words as o sinister augury, and his compliment, 'I never saw anything finer, even in my own houses,' had a perilous sound.

The banquet was served by Vatel, the first cook in France, the

gold and silver plate were of extraordinary beauty and value; but Louis only whispered to his mother, 'We will make him disgorge,' and Anne of Austria, who liked and pitied the doomed man, had to withhold her son by telling him that it would be an odious thing to arrest his host at a festival in his own honour.

A new comedy, '*Les Fâcheux*,' written by Molière, was now acted in the open air, in front of a piece of ornamental water, through which, when all had taken their seats, an enchanted rock seemed to advance, and presently was transformed into a gigantic shell, whence emerged a goddess, round whom Tritons, Naiads, Nymphs, and Cupids, grouped themselves, while she spoke a prologue addressed to the King, and beginning—

> 'Jeune, victorieux, sage, vaillant, auguste
> Aussi doux que sévère, aussi puissant que juste.'

The play was arranged so that it ended in time for darkness to permit a grand display of fireworks, in the midst of which Louis drove off, only hardened against the man who had made such a display of wealth, as he considered, at the cost of his own treasury.

Still the blow was deferred. Louis was going to Nantes to preside at the Estates of Brittany, accompanied by his Ministers. Fouquet began to be uneasy, and fell ill when he reached Nantes, where he had a magnificent hotel. He struggled, however, with his fever, and rose in time to go to the Council at 7 A.M., because the King was going out hunting.

Louis had, however, given written orders to M. d'Artagnan, the Captain of a troop of Musqueteers of the Guard, and the streets were lined with armed men. The Council lasted as usual for some hours, and at 11 o'clock, as Fouquet was going home, he was met by d'Artagnan in the small square before the Cathedral; and the King's orders were held out to him.

'I thought I stood better with the King than any one in the kingdom,' sighed Fouquet. 'Let us avoid *éclat*, I entreat you, Monsieur.'

The Musqueteer let him go into the house of a connection, the Archdeacon of Nantes, and there he was arrested, and taken away in a carriage to the Castle of Angers, a great fortress of the Plantagenets, his papers were searched, and his agent, the poet Pellisson, also imprisoned at Angers, but not allowed to see him.

When the tidings reached old Madame Fouquet, she fell on her knees, crying, 'I thank Thee, O my God; I always entreated Thee for his salvation. This is the road thereto.'

Fouquet had indeed been a very dissipated man in private life, and greedy and unscrupulous as a public servant; yet there was a reserve of piety in his heart, and his first entreaty was for a confessor; but it was long before this was granted, though his mother, wife, and daughter prayed fervently in the churches, and the old lady piteously addressed the Queens, both mother and daughter-in-law; but the ex-

amination of his papers only exasperated the King more against him. Yet he must have had a great charm about him. La Fontaine went and gazed in vain at the outside of his prison, was torn away with difficulty, and described the place in the lines—

'Chambre murée, étroite place
Quelque peu d'air pour toute grâce,
Jours sans soleil,
Nuits sans sommeil,
Trois portes en six pieds d'espace.'

The prisoner was removed to Vincennes, and thence to the Bastille, without being allowed to see any of his family, though they contrived to communicate with him. The trial lasted altogether three years. The accounts of it were constantly sent by Madame de Sévigné to M. de Pomponne, one of the Arnauld family. In the midst, the young Queen had a sharp attack of illness, from which she began to recover after putting on a plaster, compounded, amid many prayers and tears, by old Madame Fouquet. 'She has saved the Queen. She is a true saint, and works miracles,' wrote Madame de Sévigné; but gratitude had no effect on the King, and he insisted on the trial being carried on. It lasted three whole years, for life or death, for it was treason to embezzle the King's treasures, and the Parliament of Paris had Fouquet's fate in their hands. Of the thirty judges, nine were for his death, thirteen for perpetual imprisonment, and confiscation of property.

'Praise God, and thank Him,' wrote Madame de Sévigné. 'I am so glad, that I am quite beside myself!'

It was an unrelenting King. The prisoner was not allowed one glimpse of his mother, wife, or children, nor even to take his valet or his doctor, and only wore furs lent him by D'Artagnan when he was sent on the long journey to Pignerol, a mountain fortress on the borders of Savoy, where he remained till his death, twenty years later. For the first fourteen he was isolated entirely; but afterwards he was permitted to see his mother and daughter, and the good old lady had the joy of knowing him to be a devout and penitent man before she died, only a year before his long captivity was closed by his death.

The King had here shown all the hardness of a man bred to regard himself as the apex and focus of all duty, and crimes against him as inexpiable; but his gracious moods were fascinating, and there was a real ascendancy of character in him that, together with the grandeur and brilliancy of his Court, made him seem a being not to be criticised, but admired and obeyed, a sort of Jupiter in an Olympus of his own. He thought himself religious, but this was shown in obedience to the Jesuit guidance, and thus his personal rule proved all the worse for the Jansenists. He was naturally averse to their strictness, and their resistance to authority was abhorrent to him. The partizanship of Cardinal de Retz in his exile at Rome only did them harm, and under the royal influence,

the assembly of clergy passed a decree that the formulary condemning Jansen for the Five Propositions must be signed by all clergy, and all members of religious orders, and all teachers in schools.

Nobody wished to hold to the Propositions, but the Jansenists declared that they were not in the works of their master, and the nuns of Port Royal said that never having read the books, they did not know what was in them, and could not condemn without knowing. Singlin, their confessor, one of the Arnaulds, had to fly, and all the schools connected with Port Royal were closed.

The nuns in the Paris convent signed, but those in the parent convent held out for a long time. In the opinion of their enemies they were 'pious as angels, but proud as demons.' The saintly Mère Angélique, in the last stage of dropsy, and seventy years old, still thought and acted for them, and dictated so able a letter to the Queen-Mother, that it was thought that it must have been composed by Singlin, and search was made for him.

At last they signed, with an explanation that it was entirely out of submission to the Holy See, for they were not qualified to judge. The pain and grief of thus acting proved too much for Jacqueline Pascal, and she died soon after of a broken heart. Mère Angélique was dying already, but cheered and comforted all around her to the last. She expired on the Feast of the Transfiguration, the 6th of August, 1661.

The Jesuits would not accept the explanation, but insisted that the formulary must be signed unconditionally without reservation, but *pur et simple*.

Again the nuns, with Mère Agnes at their head, were in distress and perplexity, but a respite was afforded them for a time. Cardinal de Retz was reconciled to the Court in 1662, on condition of his resigning the Archbishopric of Paris, and the various formalities that took place before Hardouin de Péréfixe could be legally confirmed as his successor, or begin to act, lasted two years.

In the meantime the French Bishops, headed by the saintly Pavillon, Bishop of Alet, made a strong remonstrance, but everything failed, and the new Archbishop finally broke up the two convents, and dispersed the nuns in different convents, where they remained under sentence of excommunication, treated as criminals, pining for the Sacraments they were deprived of, separated from the Sisters with whom they had spent their devout and beneficent lives, understanding little of the points of controversy, but ever staunchly loyal to St. Cyran, Singlin, and Sacy, their directors.

Here Louis was hardened by the Jesuits to whom he had surrendered his conscience, and who, it may be feared, condoned his pride and immorality for the sake of his support of what they took for the true Church. Bossuet sometimes preached strong truths, but with a considerable wrapping of conventional compliment, and in Lent, or before

his Communions, his flagrant transgressions were discontinued for a time; but he never heard a real heart-searching reproof. And indeed compliment rose to a science in his time, not only in courtly verse or panegyric, but in ready speech. Walking at his country palace at Marly, it began to rain. Louis commiserated his companion, necessarily bare headed.

'Ah! Sire,' was the answer, 'the rain of Marly does not wet!'

Another courtier fell off a scaffolding during the building at Versailles. The King hoped he was not hurt.

'*Tout au contraire, Sire,*' was the answer.

Much better and abler men than himself felt the strange power of this magnificent royal idol.

Even his cousins, Charles II. and James, Duke of York, who, though older men, felt his ascendancy of character, and their whole tone of morals and manners were tainted by those prevalent in the Court of France. Religious woman and anxious mother as Anne of Austria was, the unintelligent devotion in which she had bred up her son, did not avail or prevent the lax habits of the nobility from infecting him. The young Queen Marie Therèse was dull, half-educated, and reserved, very little of a companion to him, and his affections had deserted her for Louise de la Vallière, a beautiful blue-eyed girl of high rank, with religious feelings, which made her miserable even while yielding to the passion she felt for the handsome and charming young King. Her alternations of love and remorse are pitiably despicable to those of true judgment in these days, but they added at the time to Louis's sentiment for her. Charles had already loved and cast aside Lucy Waters, after she had become the mother of a son who was to become a misfortune to himself, and to many others, and his present favourite was Barbara Villiers, with whom he spent all his idle moments. She married a Mr. Palmer, who was created Lord Castlemaine to give her rank.

It was held, however, to be time that he should choose a queen, and the nation hoped it would be a Protestant, but the only such lady abroad whom he had liked, Henrietta of Orange, had a mother who had affronted him in the days of his exile, and as to the German princesses, he said, 'They are all dull and foggy; I cannot like any of them for a wife.'

Moreover, they were poor, and a rich dowry was almost a necessity to the impoverished Crown. Mademoiselle had despised him in his poverty, and was past her first youth. The daughters of Spain were disposed of; but Louis turned the attention of Charles towards Portugal.

The Crowns of the Peninsula had been united by Philip II., but the rule of Spain had been harsh and galling to the Portuguese, and in 1640, the Duke of Braganza, a descendant of the direct line, who had been set aside, had succeeded in establishing himself on the throne of the little kingdom, receiving support from all those Powers who rejoiced that Spain should not only have a thorn in her side, but

be deprived of the splendid harbour of Lisbon, and of the very considerable Colonial possessions of Portugal in America and India. By the treaty of the Pyrenees, Louis had bound himself not to assist the Portuguese against the Spaniards; but this did not hinder him from being glad to secure them a powerful ally, and it was suggested to Charles by his mother, at the desire of Louis, that the young King of Portugal, Alfonso, had a sister, Catalina, of a suitable age, and that he would be willing to give her a splendid dowry to secure a royal connection.

Soon after the offer was formally made by the Portuguese ambassador, Don Francisco de Melho, of the Infanta, with £500,000 in hand, also of the city of Tangier in Africa, and the island of Bombay in the East Indies, and the right of free trade with the Colonial possessions of Portugal. Such an offer was extremely tempting, and though there were some regrets that there was no Protestant Princess to the King's taste, his counsellors, Clarendon, Ormond, and Sandwich, were dazzled by the idea of the money, and of Tangier, little thinking how much the most important part of the dowry was that island of Bombay.

Don Francisco was sent home to make further arrangements, and after a few hesitations caused by malicious reports as to the lady's health and beauty, set forth by the Spaniards, the portrait sent decided Charles that 'that person cannot be unhandsome,' and the treaty was concluded.

Catharine, as she was called in England, was dark-eyed and chestnut haired, not 'unhandsome,' but not a striking beauty. Her mother, Queen Louisa, was the leading spirit in the family, a most able woman; but she had always kept her daughter in a convent. For five years the Infanta had not been beyond its walls, and when she knew she was to be Queen of England, her excursions were only to the shrines of saints in Lisbon. What a preparation for such a husband and such a Court!

Sir Richard Fanshawe brought her the King's miniature, and early in the spring of 1662, Lord Sandwich, after taking possession of Tangier, came with the fleet to carry the bride to England. She embarked on the 23rd of April with full a hundred Portuguese gentlemen and ladies in her suite, besides six chaplains. She never came on deck through the voyage; but on arriving off the Isle of Wight, she received the Duke of York, and many civilities passed between them. She was ill for a day or two after landing at Portsmouth, but was nearly recovered by the time the King arrived, and on the 21st of May, they were privately married early in the morning, according to the Romish ritual, and after dinner, in public, in St. Thomas's Church, by the Bishop of London, according to the forms of the Church of England. The bride wore rose colour, with knots of blue ribbon, which were cut off and distributed as favours by her ladies, all present striving for a scrap. The register still exists at the church.

Charles wrote to Clarendon that he 'must be the worst man living

if he did not make a good husband,' adding that, 'we cannot stir from hence till Tuesday, by reason that there are not carts to be had to-morrow to transport all our *guarde infantas*, without which there is no stirring.

These Guarde infantas were the huge farthingales of the Portuguese ladies who were still wearing Queen Elizabeth's fashions, to the great diversion of the English ladies, with whom a far more free-and-easy style of drapery was beginning to prevail. The olive complexions of these foreign dames were as little admired as their farthingales. King Alfonso had exhorted his sister never to forsake her own country's costume, and to get it adopted in her Court, and she tried hard to do so; but fashion was too strong for her, and before long, she, too, was wearing French fashions.

For six weeks Catharine's simplicity, freshness, and delight in novelty pleased the King; but then came a great struggle between them as to whether she should receive Lady Castlemaine as one of her ladies, as Marie Therèse did by Madamoiselle de la Vallière.

When Charles himself brought her into his wife's presence, Catharine fell back in a fainting fit, and was only relieved by violent nose bleeding. Even this only provoked Charles. Ormond and Clarendon both declared that such concessions should not be demanded of a wife, nor, indeed, had any English Queen been thus treated; but Charles, impelled by the fierce temper of Lady Castlemaine, declared that if he gave up the point, the country would think him in a state of pupilage, and he even wrote a letter to Clarendon, declaring that he should regard any one who opposed his intentions as his enemy for life.

Clarendon, to his shame, submitted to argue with the poor Queen. She was desperate, and declared that she would go back to Portugal; but Clarendon showed her it was impossible, and Charles told her she had better find out whether her mother would receive her there, also that he should send home all her Portuguese attendants for encouraging her in her 'frowardness.'

In this conflict of wills, even his ordinary good-nature and courtesy gave way. He avoided coming into the company of the poor forlorn lady, and when obliged to do so, he did not speak to her, but only to those who made it their business to laugh at everything in earth or Heaven.

A visit from Queen Henrietta made things somewhat better for poor Catharine, who went with the King to meet his mother at Greenwich, and was treated by her with the utmost tenderness and affection; but unfortunately they had no language in common, for the one Queen knew no Spanish, and the other no French, nor could she yet speak English freely. Henrietta had never suffered in the same way; but she was accustomed to the French code of manners, and probably in private, persuaded her daughter-in-law to submit, for from this time she made no more resistance, but freely admitted Lady Castlemaine. Once when that personage, entering her chamber

while she was at her toilette, had the insolence to ask, 'How she could have the patience to sit so long a dressing.'

'Madam,' replied the Queen, gravely, 'I have so much reason to use patience, that I can well bear such a trifle.'

Most of her Portuguese attendants were sent home, but a few remained, and she braced herself to endurance. When she had a very severe illness in 1663, and lay for many days at the point of death, the King was touched with remorse, hung over her with unremitting attention, and shed many tears. Poor thing, in her delirium, she fancied that she had borne a son, and was only troubled that it was an ugly child. 'Nay, it is a very pretty boy,' said the King, to humour her, and in this happy delusion she slept. She was long recovering, and in the attendance on her, Charles's hair turned so grey that he began the fashion of wearing a wig, which by-and-by spread to a preposterous size.

His tokens of real affection made her position somewhat less wretched for the future, and she could endure his admiration for Frances Theresa Stuart, Lord Blantyre's daughter, a brilliant merry young creature, something of a romp, but well principled, and guarding herself effectually. It was she who sat to Rotier, the medallist, for the figure of Britannia, which we still bear on our copper coinage. Never again had the Queen hopes of a child, and the Duke of York's boy had died in early babyhood, so that the only child in the family besides the young Prince of Orange, was Mary, the newly-born daughter of the Duke of York.

Want of money was sorely pressing Charles. He wanted to send out an armament to take possession of Bombay, and he had further to assist the King of Portugal. Dunkirk was an expensive possession, requiring a garrison, and its capture having been in part a Cromwellian achievement, did not greatly interest the Royal Government. It was therefore decided that the offer of Louis XIV. should be accepted, and that it should be sold to the French for five millions of money. The English had been proud of the possession, and had had part enough in the capture to feel it like a conquest of their own, and an equivalent for Calais; but, on the other hand, the Cavaliers had fought for its defenders, and esteemed it an expensive and useless piece of property. It was the more vexatious to find that Louis was making the fortifications almost impregnable, and forming a harbour capable of containing thirty ships-of-the-line, so that in time of war it became a very dangerous neighbour. The London merchants had offered Charles a sum exceeding the purchase-money if he would keep Dunkirk in his own hands, and probably he would have accepted this, if he had not been engaged in secret negotiations with the French. Clarendon increased great odium on this account. He was building himself a grand mansion, it was popularly supposed with his share of the price, and the name of Dunkirk House was bestowed on it by the general voice.

PREPARATION OF PRAYER-BOOK LESSONS.

XXXVIII.

THE LAST COMMUNION AND COMMENDATION.

Susan. I have been thinking constantly of the lines in the 'Christian Year.'

Aunt Jane. Say them. They cannot be heard too often.

S. I will begin here, where

> 'Faith listens, till her pale eye glow
> With joy wild heathens never know,
> And each calm feature, ere we read,
> Speaks, silently, thy glorious creed.
>
> Such have I seen; and while they pour'd
> Their hearts in every contrite word,
> How have I rather long'd to kneel,
> And ask of them sweet Pardon's seal.
> How blest the heavenly music brought,
> By thee to aid my faltering thought;
> Peace ere we kneel, and when we cease
> To pray, the farewell word is "Peace."
>
> I come again, the room was bright,
> With something of celestial light;
> A simple altar by the bed
> For high Communion meetly spread.
> Chalice and Plate and snowy vest,
> We ate and drank, then calmly blest
> All mourners, one with dying breath,
> We sate, and talked of JESUS' death.'

This, then, is the fit place to speak of the Communion of the Sick, though it has a separate heading in the Prayer-book.

A. For its Collect, Epistle, and Gospel; the only ones intended for occasional services which have been introduced at the compilation of our English Prayer-book.

S. How is that?

A. Because the Reformers wanted to do away with Reservation and the public carrying of the Host to the Sick. Even in 1549 the rubric was, 'And if the same day there be a Celebration of the Holy Communion in the Church, then shall the priest reserve so much of the Sacrament of the Body and Blood as shall serve the sick person, and so many as shall communicate with him (if there be any), and so soon as he conveniently may after the open Communion ended in the Church, go and minister the same food to those that are appointed to communicate with the sick (if there be any), and last of

all with the sick person himself.' It was added that the Confession and Absolution, and the comfortable words in the Communion Service, must precede the sick man's reception; and there was another rubric enacting that when consecrated for one sick person, the Blessed Sacrament might be carried to another.

S. It was a most wise and right provision, it seems to me, and quite cruel to do away with it!

A. It was a great mistake. You see Calvinism led the Puritans to regard reverence to the Holy Sacraments as idolatry, and acknowledgment of the most material and superstitious view of the Real Presence. On that account they shortened as much as possible the space of time during which the Elements were consecrated and unconsumed even in Church, they endeavoured to prevent kneeling, and forbade any portion to be carried out of the Church, or taken from house to house.

S. Yes; one reads how sorely conscientious people were tried in Continental towns by meeting a priest carrying the Host with a canopy and servers attending, when they actually put themselves in danger by not showing the reverence that they fancied was idolatrous.

A. In that spirit this rule was made; and I am afraid that Church feeling ebbed so low, that the practical cruelty was long unfelt in compelling a fresh consecration to take place for every communicant at the time of some epidemic, and sometimes in lengthening the service too much for a greatly exhausted patient. A proposal to alter the rubric has been introduced into Convocation, but was rejected. I hope greatly that it may be carried when there has been more time for consideration.

S. I suppose what was really intended was to prevent the carrying the Host at the head of a procession, as a kind of charm in the time of danger from pestilence and the like.

A. Which was done sometimes in earnest faith, sometimes in superstition.

S. But did it ever stop the plague, like Aaron making atonement between the dead and the living?

A. St. Gregory the Great, St. Mamertus of Vienne, would seem to have rightly used it in faith; but I should think the analogy was to the carrying the Ark into battle. It brought victory to Joshua, and defeat and death to Hophni and Phinehas.

S. Then it would depend upon the spirit in which it was done.

A. Remember, too, there were two parties contending when the Prayer-book was compiled: one anxious to preserve its catholicity, and conceding something for the sake of saving the rest; and the other, so much afraid of anything not Scriptural on the very surface, and depending so much more on the feeling they called faith, than on its pledges, that they cared little for throwing impediments in the way of last Communions.

S. I have been shocked in some books, even at the present day,

where a death-bed communion—even of a repenting, believing person—was discouraged, for fear it should be viewed as a passport.

A. Reaction from the good old name of Viaticum, for the journey over the dark river of Jordan. The Greek Church consecrates on Maunday Thursday a store, which is reserved through the entire year for the dying. And the Roman Church makes the exception to her rule of morning hours and fasting the communicating of the sick.

S. I remember. I think it was Maurice de Guerin who thus first realised that he was dying. Why is there that rubric commanding that several persons should communicate at the same time, making it indeed an absolute necessity.

A. That is in the same spirit, enhancing the fact of a Communion, rather than that of a Eucharist.

S. Let me see. You mean that the eating together of the One Bread and drinking of the One Cup was more to them than the participating in the One Great Sacrifice once offered.

A. In fact, the desire was to prevent the sick person from dwelling on the idea of the holy Eucharist being an actual sacrifice, offered for him (and no doubt the distinction between the commemoration joining the Original Sacrifice), and the sacrifice was often lost to the ignorant. The joining the feast of that last Thursday night was instead to be made the prominent thought, and therefore other communicants were required both in church and in the house.

S. And why does the sick person come last?

A. For fear of infection. It might be alarming if the precaution were taken in some particular case, so it was charitable to make this, once for all, the universal rule.

S. Is the Collect a new one?

A. So far as I can make out, it was written in 1549; it was preceded then by the sentence: 'O praise the Lord, all ye nations, laud Him, all ye people, for His merciful kindness if confirmed towards us, and the truth of the Lord endureth for ever,' then the Doxology, the Kyrie, and 'the Lord be with you,' and its response. It is hard to say why this beautiful cheering opening was omitted.

S. The Collect, Epistle, and Gospel chime together beautifully. But there is no opening for an offering.

A. I suppose because the sick person has already been exhorted to remember the poor, and besides, a rubric might call for offerings from the needy at a time when they could least afford it. The harpy assemblage of priests and monks and friars round dying beds was one of the worst mediæval abuses; and even now, in Roman Catholic countries, where the clergy themselves are poor and of a low stamp, there are instances of sad exactions, and I have no doubt that the absence of an offertory was to guard against this. But many persons do voluntarily make an offering at private Eucharists, especially when the case is of a permanent invalid in no pressing danger, but never able to come to church.

S. And certainly it would be right, where there are the means. One question more, why did *housel* mean to receive the Blessed Sacrament?

A. Here is Mr. Evans's note, *hunsl* or *husl* was old Northern for a sacrifice; *hunsljan*, old Gothic for to offer sacrifice, no doubt from the same root as the Latin *hostis*, a victim, whence, as you know, Host.

S. I see that when there is no Communion at the time of the visitation, the seventy-first Psalm is to follow the Collect of Reconciliation.

A. Yes. It is one of King David's last Psalms, composed in the time of illness and old age, and is distinctly prophetical of our Lord's Passion, and persecution by His enemies.

S. I see, in the 10th and 11th verses.

A. So that the sufferer not only has David's words of prayer to express his own wants, but is joined with the Son of David in what otherwise might not be applicable.

S. What is meant by 'I am become as it were a monster unto many'?

A. The Bible version has 'a wonder.' The proper meaning of monster, *monstrum*, is something to be shown. It applies most fully to our Blessed Lord on the cross, and if properly understood would often express the feelings of a patient in a very distressing state, wondered at and pitied by all around. The last four verses are omitted as too exultant in recovery. I think the Psalm is a suggestion in case of need that the priest or attendants may continue repeating Psalms.

S. As Archbishop Wintgift did for Queen Elizabeth.

A. Yes. Generally the penitential Psalms. As St. Margaret died with the fifty-first on her tongue, and in time of sickness of our own or other people, there is nothing more precious than such familiarity with the Psalms as to be able to call them to ourselves, or repeat them without book fearlessly and expressively. I have known a lady say how much she regretted being unable to do so; and on the the other hand, I knew a clergyman who said there was nothing for which he was more thankful to his mother than for his thorough memory of them, and a dear young scholar, who died of decline in the Bournemouth Home, used to solace her sleepless nights with them. It is a sad pity that people in the silly fear of boring children do not get them gradually learnt by heart at the best time. But if they have not been thus taught, it would be well each day to learn a verse or two.

S. I learnt a good many as a child, and I am trying to learn others.

A. The sentence which follows the Psalm is the old Antiphon, drawing out the full Christian spirit of the Psalm. The first and beautiful benediction that ensues, was a gem added in 1549.

S. The other is the High Priest's blessing to the Israelites, with the threefold repetition of the Holy Name (Num. vi. 24–26).

A. Yes, that was added in the revision of 1662. Bishop Cosin having taken it from the old Irish and Gallican rituals.

S. I like that. And there are four more prayers.

A. All added in 1662. The American Prayer-book has two more. One for the mourners around, one in case of sudden surprise or danger, and a thanksgiving in the beginning of recovery. All which might be very helpful, though they have not the flow of our own Prayer-book.

S. I have been very glad to use that for the sick child at home by myself.

A. Yes; it seems to be meant for that, or for cases when the little creature cannot take part in the prayers around him.

S. Those intercessions for the person with small hope of recovery, and for the one troubled in mind, can also be used in private, and at a distance. How beautiful the Commendatory Prayer is.

A. Ah! my dear, by the time people are as old as I am, that prayer gets associations that make it not easy to discuss it. It is one substitute for the old form of Commendation. Depart, O Christian soul, from this world, in the Name of God the Father, Who made thee, of God the Son, Who redeemed the, of God the Holy Ghost, Who sanctifieth thee.

S. May I read it from 'the Dream of Gerontius,' which, I suppose, is as nearly a translation as making it into blank verse will allow.

'Profiscere, anima Christiana, de hôc Mundo,
Go forth upon thy journey, Christian soul,
Go from this world. Go in the Name of God,
The Omnipotent Father, Who created thee!
Go, in the Name of Jesus Christ, the Lord,
Son of the living God, Who bled for thee;
Go, in the Name of the Holy Spirit, Who
Hath been poured out on thee! Go, in the name
Of Angels and Archangels; in the name
Of Thrones and Dominations; in the name
Of Princedoms and of Powers; and in the name
Of Cherubim and Seraphim, go forth.
Go in the name of Patriarchs and Prophets,
And of Apostles and of Evangelists;
Of Martyrs and Confessors; in the name
Of holy Monks and Hermits; in the name
Of holy Virgins, and all saints of God,
Both men and women, go. Go on thy course,
And may thy place to-day be found in peace;
And may thy dwelling be the holy Mount
Of Sion, through the Name of Christ the Lord.'

Was that the old English commendation?

A. I do not think it was; at least I cannot find it in any of my books; but it is certainly in use in the Roman Church, and it is a beautiful gathering of the soul to the multitudes awaiting it in Paradise.

S. Was not the knell rung for the dying, not the dead, that every one might be warned to pray for the departing soul?

A. Yes; and thus it was called 'the passing bell.' I have heard my good old grandmother exclaim at the first toll, 'God have mercy on his poor soul,' and I think that was the remnant of one of the pious customs that were done away with, partly because of the rapacity of the mediæval clergy, partly because of the Calvinistic dread of encouraging the doctrine of Purgatory, and lastly, because of the evil revelry that in rude and course families survived all that was pious and reverent.

S. Yes; in accounts of old times, it is plain that a death led to a perfect orgie of the worst sort of priests, monks, friars, and beggars of all sorts.

A. Who came under plea of praying for the soul of the deceased, and to enjoy the alms that the family gave to secure their prayers. There were regulations of the Church from the first for the Lyke wake, or watch around the corpse. The wailing of professional mourners was discouraged in the Latin Church from the first, thus interpreting St. Paul's recommendation not to sorrow as those who have no hope; but where the national character is demonstrative, as in the East, the Greek Church only regulated the lamentations.

S. And in Ireland, they have always been kept up.

A. The Western Church directed the clergy and deaconesses reverently to wash and lay out the dead, and sing Psalms around them, especially the De Profundis. Synod after synod enforced that only pious hymns should be sung, tried to stem the worldliness of the clergy who only thus attended the rich, and commanded that if only the relations were left to keep watch, and they were too ignorant to repeat Psalms, they should sing the Kyrie Eleison alone.

S. Ought there to be the watch?

A. Some people keep watch and pray round their beloved dead in loving tender reverence. It is not needful. We know that the Temple whence the Spirit has fled is safe, and when all things are done decently and in order, there is no necessity to strain feelings, or the often exhausted physical powers; but we can leave the mortal frame in its Maker's keeping.

SHORT ESSAYS.

BY ELIZABETH M. SEWELL.

ESSAY I.

FAMILY TRADITIONS.

A STRANGE thing it is to know that one is growing old—in fact, that one is old, having reached the natural term of man's life—and yet not to feel old. Jeremy Taylor gives striking and distressing details of the signs of age, some not pleasant to quote; but I suppose all persons who have reached the age of threescore years and ten must be aware of the presence of grey hairs. Wrinkled skin, dim eyesight, with an occasional perception of short memory, are also among the earliest tokens, but they do not actually touch the mental powers, neither do they affect mental enjoyment. And in the rush of life, as it is now constituted, they may appear, and yet be unnoticed by ourselves, and by those nearest to us. 'How aged such an one is!' we say of others. 'There is so much alteration since last year.' But those who live with the person of whom we are speaking, probably see no change. Photographs, indeed, are tell-tales and reminders; but then it is easy to smooth wrinkles, and soften down hard lines; and even when the likeness is too obviously old, those who love us can trace in the withered features the life and brightness of years gone by. Wordsworth, it is said, was shown the likeness of his wife as an old woman, and was told that it was considered very good, but he shook his head, and answered: 'I cannot see it; to me she is still what she was when I married her.' The extent of this loving delusion as to the ravages of time is sometimes singularly exemplified by our own experience. A relation of my own was expecting to meet her brother at a railway station. He did not appear, and when looking for him, she described him to the porter as a gentleman with dark hair and grey eyes. His hair really was silvery grey, but to her he was still what he had been as a young man.

The growth of the rising generation is perhaps the most startling reminder of the fact that one is old. Great-nephews and nieces, like grandchildren, unconsciously preach many a sermon. Their young lives are stretching out into a region lying so far beyond our ken that we can in no way picture it to ourselves. The dawn is breaking, but the noonday is beyond the reach of our imagination, and so at every turn we, the old, are brought, as it were, to a stand-still. Our thoughts and hopes run on into the distant future, even as they did twenty years ago, but they rest, where? And then we say

to ourselves, 'what is the use of thinking, and fearing, and hoping? Our own individuality has nothing to do with the future in this world, and the future of the little ones is lost in mystery.'

We say it, yet still we find ourselves thinking and dreaming, loving and planning—how vainly! The generation more directly near to us are in a measure sharing our cares. We know fairly well what they may expect, and it is natural that we should look forward a few years for and with them; but the babies, the children whom we only see at rare intervals, what will they know of us? How little do we know ourselves of those whose shadows gather about our own childish memories! It is a sorrowful consciousness which comes over us. We can never be much more than shadows to these little ones. The old love the young, as the young can seldom or never love the old. Every smile and tear, the tones of the baby voice, the sadness of the childish heart, touch us, and continue to touch us, strangely. That is why grandparents are said as a rule to spoil their grandchildren. The distance of years brings with it the mystery of beauty and poetry. But why should we be such shadows? We long to be remembered, to be recognised as having assisted in moulding these fresh young lives. Why are we contented to let them remain so much in ignorance about us?

The question has often occurred to me. I look back upon my own childhood and remember so many things, which, now that I can understand their significance, tend to throw light upon the history of my family, and in consequence on my own; but the circumstances surrounding them are obscure. Again and again I have said to myself, 'if I had only asked my mother more about herself, and her early life when she was with me, I should have been much more sympathetic and tender in my intercourse with her; and far greater interest would have been attached to my present surroundings.'

Books, pictures, engravings, china ornaments have come into my possession, and that of my sisters—but *en masse*. There were separate stories attached to them once, but they are all for the most part forgotten. The joys and sorrows, the hopes and fears of precious lives have been attached to them; many probably could tell a tale of gratitude, others were the visible symbols of affection; a few possibly are the witnesses to hopes which, when disappointed, wrecked the happiness of a life; but they are all nothing now. If it happened to be expedient the young generation would put them without thought into the auction mart, to be valued simply according to the fashionable value of the hour. And perhaps it is well that it should be so. If we attached too much romance to our possessions we might only multiply the ties already too numerous which bind us to earth; but as a matter of interest there can be no doubt that we have lost much by our ignorance of the past, and that the present young generation are likely to lose more, for the rush of life is now so great that it leaves little or no time for the elders of a family to recall their own

experiences, or to hand them down to those who are to come after them. And this absence of continuity, if it may be so called—this blank between the lives of grandfathers and great-grandfathers and their direct descendants, must tell more seriously in another way. It certainly must tend to encourage in the young the concentration of thought upon self. When the past is hidden from us, or seen only through a mist, we naturally fix our imagination on the present or the future, in which we may ourselves take part. The traditions of old historic families unquestionably tell upon the living branches; but in ordinary cases, when there are no special traditions, the young energetic mind devotes itself to the formation of its own career, whilst the mind which is not energetic lives simply for the day, carelessly floating down the stream of Time to the great Lethean river, in which such countless memories have been lost.

With this tone of mind reverence naturally diminishes, and with reverence respect—a more visibly useful quality than reverence in this working world, and therefore more generally valued.

We old people feel this very keenly. When at seventy we are addressed by a girl or boy of seventeen in the familiar tone of absolute equality, we shrink back, jarred. Yet the young people mean no harm. They only follow the instinct of their age, which tells them that the world is for the young who have life before them, that they have made a fresh starting-point for themselves, and that the link with the past, though it cannot be broken, need not be recognised, except as a matter of historical or antiquarian interest.

I think the impulse of the old is to stand aside when this kind of self-assertion comes before them. They have not the strength to contend with it, neither have they always the inclination, for the secret of what is termed 'progress' is to be found in it. Yet personally, it is offensive, and if so, there must be something in it to be condemned. What is this something?

Looking back on one's own life often helps one to unravel the problems of the present hour. For we who now are old were once young, self-asserting and progressive. We can all, I suppose, remember the spirit in which we dealt with our elders, and few of us, I fancy, can ponder on such memories without self-reproach.

How self-opinionated we were! How little we understood the reason of the commands laid upon us! How we fretted against restrictions! How quietly we put aside the opinion of our elders, as being not in accord with the needs of the rising generation! And how very selfish we were in our interests! How little we comprehended the sorrows, the anxieties, and disappointments of our parents and elder relations! Even when years have given us experience of trial, it is probably not till late in life that we really begin to understand what those who preceded us had in their day to bear.

I remember in my own case, an allusion which my mother used occasionally to make to a sore trouble in her life, but which for years

I scarcely attended to. It was connected with events so far in the past—I seemed to have no concern with it; but it haunted her to her dying day. In her last hours she spoke of it to me again, and more fully. I understood it better then, and the fact that at such a time it should recur, struck me forcibly; yet it was not till years after that I realised all which it had involved, or could estimate the purity and nobility of character which had enabled her to go through the trial bravely as she did. This want of mutual comprehension between the old and the young is often perceived, but generally speaking, it is accepted as unavoidable. We did not understand or sympathise with our elders, and now the young do not sympathise with us, and we say to ourselves, it is part of the discipline of life.

Yes, it is discipline, but I think it might be softened; a good deal might probably be done to bring the young into communion of spirit with the old, and thus to encourage respect, if not reverence, by some attempt on our part to awaken their interest in bygone days. So often now I wish I had heard more of the trials of the elder members of my own family! So often I desire to know the history of certain individuals, and to understand how certain events, which have intimately affected my own life, had their rise! But it was not the custom in my early days, and I do not think it is the custom now, for the old to take the young into their confidence, or for the young especially to seek for it. It might be better for both parties if it were.

We, the old, are too apt to take it for granted that the young know what they are entirely ignorant of, and then we are vexed with them for not being more grateful or more thoughtful about us. Why do we not tell them if possible what it is which has brought a burden upon us, which perhaps prematurely silvered our hair, and diminished our strength, or which has made us tremble, and be afraid at circumstances which in themselves seem to be of no importance.

The Past is always more or less a romance, even to ourselves, and certainly it will be so to the generation who have no personal knowledge of it. Journals, reminiscences, autobiographies, are attractive even to outsiders, and who can care so much for them as those who inherit the results of the events narrated in them? Did any one ever take up a great-grandfather's journal, or even diary, without dwelling with a riveted attention upon the most common details? They bring those almost historical times into intimate association with our own; and when the events are not so far past, when they only go back to days in which our infancy had a share, the interest awakened is of a more personal, and it may even be called a more sacred, character.

We have ourselves suffered or profited by the daily life which is portrayed so unconsciously. It is, in fact, a portion of our own life, and even in that selfish view, it is of importance, for the continuity of family life is a great element in the formation of character. The fact that ancestral worship is the main element in the religion of a

large portion of the human race, points to a similar conclusion. Though in itself a miserable superstition, it is undoubtedly founded upon a natural instinct. Race and family are great mysteries. Abstract entities, shall we call them, or ideas? It is a metaphysical question which we may well leave to the controversies of philosophers. They *are*, that is all we can say, and we have to take them into account in our own self-discipline, and in the training of others committed to our care; and so I have come to the conclusion in my own mind that it is the duty of the old, and the wisdom of the young, to make family history, so far as is possible, a matter of information to the new generation. It is only by acquaintance with the Past that we can learn to respect its efforts, and sympathise with its difficulties; and respect and sympathy are essential elements in right Conservatism.

I shrink from using a political, abused, and misunderstood term, and yet there is no other word that so clearly expresses the spirit which must be cultivated if a check is to be placed upon the headlong rush of the present day. Respect for the days gone by does not in the least preclude an acknowledgment of the errors and shortcomings connected with them; rather it brings these out more fully as we contrast them with the improvements and advantages of our own times. The story of imperfect desultory instruction which we, elders, have to relate to the children, who listen to it with such eager amusement, rests in their minds more lastingly than any warning words which we might use to impress upon them gravely how much better off they are. And sometimes perhaps it may give them all—especially the girls—a lesson in humility. If mothers and aunts know nothing of mathematics and algebra; if grandmothers and great-aunts learned by rote without explanation; if no one in those dark days had lectures from professors, or prepared for Oxford and Cambridge Examinations; whilst the idea of competing with university students would have been deemed the height of presumption; and if nevertheless hundreds of these ignorant progenitors and relatives grew up to be sensible, estimable women, thoroughly fulfilling their home duties, and so well-informed as to the spread of science and literature that they laid the foundation of a wider and deeper instruction for the young who have succeeded them; perhaps—at all events, the question can scarcely fail to be suggested to thoughtful minds—perhaps there may be something worthy of ambition beyond the honour of a Girton scholarship, or the attainment of a University degree; perhaps these high distinctions are only means to an end; perhaps the unenlightened parents and teachers of sixty or seventy years ago managed to attain the desired end by different means. They may have travelled by the stage coach, whilst the present generation travel by railway; but the place of destination may have been reached by all.

But what destination? That is a very important inquiry. I

would rather answer it on another occasion. To enter upon it now would be to wander from the subject with which I started. These stories of former educational experiences are only some amongst the many topics which, when pleasantly touched upon, help to form a link between ourselves and the little ones to whom we are striving to make ourselves more than shadows.

Manners, customs, anecdotes of persons of note with whom we may happen to have been acquainted, and especially personal reminiscences connected with historical events, are full of attraction. It has only lately dawned upon me that to speak of the Crimean War to my little great-niece, will be likely to have the same effect upon her mind, half of romance, and half of awe, as the account of the dread of a French invasion in the days of the first Napoleon had upon myself, when my mother told me of her friends burying their silver in their gardens, whilst she herself was sent for safety to a relation living at Twyford, near Winchester; and, on the Sunday after her arrival, the clergymen addressed the congregation, and informed them that carts were in readiness to convey the women and children farther into the interior, because it was not deemed safe for them to remain so near the coast.

And there are domestic histories also relating to the generation absolutely gone by, which will keenly enlist the sympathies of the children. The trials of our own lives may be too nearly connected with the lives of those next in succession to be touched upon with the little ones of the third generation. We may not venture to tell them the tale of misunderstanding and separation, or explain the differences of character which belong to our own day; but the long past sorrows, which, with all their surroundings, are buried in the graves of our parents and grandparents, form a tale of experience, having the intense interest of truth, whilst it is adorned with the vivid colouring, sometimes supposed to belong only to fiction.

Once let these pass into oblivion and they can never be recalled. There is a picture in my own possession, the likeness of a member of my family in bygone days, which I never look at without a sense of regret that I know nothing about the individual whom it represents. It came to us with several others from a great-uncle. My father and mother doubtless knew whom it represents; but they never thought of telling us. It used to hang on the wall of the great-uncle's house; but I was a mere child when this uncle died, and never saw it there, and when it came into our own hands, I never asked any questions about it. It has no tale to tell except that it has some marked family features. And there is another—the old blue gentleman, as we sometimes call him—equally distinctive in his features, and belonging evidently to my mother's family; but he also is all but a blank. He has no name, no definite history; we only say he must have been so-and-so. His portrait might be sold at the auction mart, and no one

would regret him. It is hard upon both these men. No doubt the taking of these portraits was a marked event in their lives, and they thought they were handing down their names with honour to those who would come after them. But a little indolence, a little procrastination, the common taking it for granted that children know what relates to their surroundings, has blotted them out from the family records, and with them has gone the story of their actions, the influence of their good example, and the warning of their mistakes and errors.

We all like to think that we shall be remembered. I sometimes wonder why. If our lives in the unknown world, to which some of us are drawing so near, are to be absolutely separated from this present world—if we are to know nothing of what goes on in it—the fact that we are remembered or forgotten can be of very little moment to us. And we are apt to speak as if it were so, but natural instinct is on the other side. The gifts of the dying, their words and injunctions, tell against the idea that there is this absolute separation. There are, indeed, great difficulties in the way of understanding how such knowledge can be maintained without disturbing the peace of the just by the knowledge of earth's sorrow; but there are equally great difficulties in the way of understanding how the complicated affections, pleasures, sorrows, interests of our present existence can be maintained without producing a chaos of conflicting feelings.

It is only experience which enables us to comprehend that the course of human life is in any way compatible with happiness. The mere fact that a man leaves his father and mother and cleaves to his wife; that a daughter gives up her happy childhood's home and enters upon an untried sphere with a husband whom perhaps she has only known for a year, and yet that family affections are kept up, would, if we had only been told that such a state of things was to be, and had never known that it could be—prove sufficient to perplex us with the solution of an insoluble problem. Difficulties with regard to the next world always seem to me intangible, for they are founded upon a false analogy, derived from the supposition that the conditions of the next world must necessarily resemble those of this world. But surely the true analogy is derived from the certainty we have that a loving Providence is working alike in each. The next world may be very unlike this in many respects—probably it will be; but the Divine Wisdom which has arranged it for our good will know how to fit us to our new condition of being. And, as Bishop Butler says, 'when we go out of this world, we may pass into new scenes, and a new state of life and action, just as naturally as we came into the present.'

The desire for fame also, which in some minds is so strong an incentive to action, points in the same direction. Fame can be of little value, if the individuals who render themselves famous are not conscious of it. It may be useful to those who come after them—their children and relatives—but to themselves it must be nothing.

But once think of life as continuous and conscious, and the Past is no longer past. Those who have crossed the threshold of death are, under that idea, still with us, only they are silent. They leave it to us to hand on their histories. That is why I should like all young people to know everything that can be truthfully and reverently told of their ancestors and relations. What could be said in love and truth to the dead, if present in the flesh, may fairly be told with equal love and equal truth when they may possibly be present in the spirit. There can be no need for deception.

In the next world we shall all view ourselves impartially, and seeing our shortcomings, as assuredly we never yet have seen them in the light of God's Holiness, we shall have but one desire that they may be turned to good by becoming a warning to those who are struggling with temptations like to our own.

But the conditions of this next world, and the questions connected with Death and Immortality, the Past and the Future, are tremendous. The thoughts which they suggest cannot be touched upon in a cursory way. For the present they must be left. Only again I would say, we are not wise if, through indolence or thoughtlessness, we suffer the Past to be past.

"SUCH AS DO STAND."

"That it may please Thee to strengthen such as do stand."
—*Book of Common Prayer.*

BY LUCY PHILLIMORE, AUTHOR OF 'SIR C. WREN,' ETC.

A LONG-ESTABLISHED magazine betrays in its correspondence and its shorter articles the general drift of its readers' opinions, and the changes in their fashions of life and thought.

Perhaps one of the most marked of these changes comes under the head of 'Dress.' It is not for a moment intended to burden our readers with a disquisition on the fashions, or on the moralities of this subject, only it may be observed that whereas, whether in essay, letter, or story, the subject of dress was treated as a frivolous one, beneath the notice of a superior woman or a sensible girl, it has now risen to the dignity of Art and a Science. It asserts itself on the Stage, in Painting, and in Novels. To be a heroine at all is now hardly possible without a large stock of expensive dresses, with mantles and bonnets to match! Whether it is cause or effect it is hard to determine; but the business of dressmaking in all its branches is vastly increased, and employs an enormous number of young women. Look at one of the great West-end establishments, and see at the dinner-hour or at closing time what a multitude pours out from the private door: 'bodice-hands,' 'skirt-hands,' 'sleeve-hands,' 'tailoresses,' 'fitters,' 'embroideresses,' 'milliners,' 'improvers,' 'apprentices,' the girls, or rather children, who do the errands, pick up pins, and scrape whalebone, to say nothing of the young women who serve behind the counter or in the show-room. Where do they all live? is an irresistible question, and what becomes of them?

The large shops do house and look after a great many of their workpeople; but it is impossible for them to take in all whom they employ, especially the extra hands, who must shift for themselves. Nor is it an unmixed advantage to those who sleep at the houses of business. The mixed company, the full room with its unscreened beds, its absence of any quiet corner for prayer or thought, is very trying. It is life in the perpetual glare of publicity and continual talk. Not seldom also will some be found who do their utmost to laugh down good habits, to sneer at holiness, and use every effort to relax the hold, possibly slight enough, which a girl may have upon religion.

But when this comparatively small number are, even with these grave drawbacks, in a manner provided for, what happens to all the rest?

What happens to the servants out of place, or to the country girl who has come up to London, firmly believing—as many still do believe—that 'London streets are paved with gold'? Too often they are brought to great straits, robbed on one pretext or another, reduced to pawn garment after garment, and at last to take a place where they are 'not particular.' How is such an one to work her way up again, liable as she is to be turned off on short notice to recommence the same dreary round? Certain agencies are at work, however, to befriend domestic servants, even though their best efforts cannot keep pace with the number with whom they have to deal. But it is calculated that there are at work in London 16,000 young women *not* domestic servants, and of these some live at their own homes, some are lodged at their places of business, but the large remainder find lodgings for themselves. Enough, more than enough has been lately made public as to lodging-houses, which are actual abodes of wickedness, and the subject is too horrible to be touched upon here. Yet in passing it must be said that few things are more difficult, even for the born and bred Londoner, than to ascertain that the lodging which her slender purse permits, is a respectable one, where the street-door is locked at night, and where she can safely bestow herself. For the girl fresh from the country, be she a young servant, or one who has, to her pride and delight, obtained work in a London shop, the risk is tenfold. Many of the saddest stories which from time to time appear in the newspapers, many which never come to light in this world, are to be traced to this one pitfall for unguided feet. No blame at first, but no friend, no warning, and so ship-wreck; and yet all might have been so easily averted!

But to pass from this dark and terrible part of the picture. Suppose our young workwoman to have a respectable lodging to which, after a long day's work, she returns; yet what a dreary spot it is. She cannot call it going home to return to that one little dingy close room, cold in winter and hot in summer, which is her alternative with her place of work. Or, perhaps, if times are hard and wages low, there is the other resource of a bed in a larger room shared with strange women. What a place for a long winter's evening, or the hot breathless nights of summer, what a place for rest on a holiday or a Sunday! If illness comes—and long hours, spent in hot rooms by day, cold walks back at night are very apt to sow dangerous seeds—a corner in a lodging-house is far more forlorn than any hospital. To lie fretting over lost time, possible loss of place, and well-nigh empty purse, and hardly to venture on such a luxury as a doctor, is a severe trial to any young woman; doubly so when experience has shown her that once get your head under water in London, and it will need helping hands, and those strong ones, to raise it again.

If this is escaped, still the loneliness of a London lodging with no friend, no sympathy, no amusement! What is to prevent this

becoming oppressive to a degree dangerous to mind and body? One thing alone, a lively faith, a strong conviction of God as an ever-present friend. That indeed can supply the lack of all else; but it is a great grace, and how can we look to find it in all these half-taught, overworked girls, to whom it would be little wonder if Sunday appeared to exist merely as a day of physical rest, and for the display on their own persons of something like the finery with which during the six previous days they have been adorning other people?

Must this always be so? And is the difficulty so great, the problem so vast, that there is no solution attainable? Is it one of the inevitable evils of modern society? Not altogether; for we can point to one effort, and in many respects a very successful effort, to remedy the evil. For many years a Confraternity of young women, known as the All Saints' Confraternity, has existed attached to the Church of All Saints, Margaret Street, which provides for the members a meeting-place and a tea on Sundays, opportunities of church-going, religious instruction, and friends to help them on in a life of holiness. The work was begun and is still continued by the Clergy and Sisters of All Saints, and some ladies as Associates working under them.

As the Confraternity prospered a recreation-room was opened every evening, with singing and music classes, and classes for French, games and books, and supplied the lack of rest and amusement, and good companionship, which had pressed so hardly on the young women before. By degrees it grew evident that the necessity of all was a house where cheap respectable lodging could be obtained, and enough wholesome and inviting food both to stimulate and supply appetites, which confinement in close rooms rendered sickly and capricious. After much anxious thought a house—rescued from very different uses—was taken at 34, Mortimer Street, and called St. Gabriel's Home, and all, except the ground-floor, of the next house was added the next year. By this lodging is provided for twenty-one young women besides Sisters and servants. There is also accommodation for the meetings of the Young Women's Confraternity, and a room for the week-day classes and the Sunday's Bible Class; and on the much-loved 'Sunday out,' tea and a quiet place to sit between service hours. The Home is for young women of good character, members of the Church of England, and is almost the only one of its kind which exists for their special use. To keep this house going, with its twenty-one inmates, and all these additional guests, is of course hard and responsible work, but is cheerfully undertaken by the Sisters from All Saints who manage it. To have everything nice, in good order, clean and comfortable, and yet to spend not one unnecessary penny, to keep a mind sufficiently at leisure to listen and advise, to give the spiritual life its due pre-eminence, all this is amply enough to tax all the powers of mind

and body. Add to that the fear, not only of having no spare cash to meet the inevitable repairs necessitated by the wear and tear of a house always full, but of seeing quarter-day come round when the rent is not forthcoming, and the burden is too heavy; and some of the really useful work must be put aside that the Sister Superior may employ herself in what is commonly summed up in the word 'begging.'

Here is the state of the case. The young women in their various houses of business earn 10*s.*, or at best 12*s.* a week. In an ordinary lodging-house they pay from 4*s.* to 5*s.* a week for lodging, from 1*s.* 3*d.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* a day for meals, each charged for separately, making their expenses, on an average, always in excess of their earnings, and leaving no margin for dress, boots and shoes, nor of course any possibility of saving or provision for illness. What resource is *honestly* possible but pawning or selling all that can be parted with, or omitting a meal, and so pinching out the money bit by bit? But alas! these desperate efforts do but sow seeds of illness, and assist an already unhealthy life to undermine the constitution. Another and a terrible resource suggested to them, nay, is too often pressed upon them by companions and acquaintance—the wages of sin. A resource of which it is a shame even to speak, if it were not that we trust this fierce and frightful temptation has only to be hinted for every one to be eager to turn it aside, and to deliver those who are bravely resisting its approach, and to whom the mention is a horror.

In St. Gabriel's Home the lodgers are free from this frightful peril. Not that life there is too easy or too sheltered; far from it, many a risk of London streets, many a sharp temptation, much of 'evil communication' has still to be bravely withstood, sneers and taunts have to be disregarded, some persecution to be met and endured; but there is to set against this the support of true friends, good examples, opportunities of prayer and meditation, help and healing for body and soul, and the great preservative of a good home atmosphere.

One or two such brave girls thus 'strengthened' may not only keep themselves in temperance, soberness, and chastity, but may rescue a companion, raise the tone of the workroom, and widely extend the good work begun in St. Gabriel's Home.

It has been shown that the earnings of the average young woman in business cannot be stretched so as to cover proper food and lodging, either she must be badly lodged and half fed, or she is bankrupt.

It is a frightful state of things, produced by the unequal pressure of the work in summer and winter, and still more by the immense competition, so that to refuse the low wages is to be at once dismissed and the place filled up at once by some one of the twenty other girls who are anxiously waiting for employment.

In spite of the Act of Parliament, work at extra hours, lasting on till one and two in the morning, is frequently exacted when there is a

great pressure of work, and *for this overtime no payment is made*, exhausting though this additional strain is for the tired eyes and aching fingers. It may be that by-and-by some strong remedy may be brought to bear on this evil, or that in time the overplus of young women may turn to other employments, or the great shops and fashionable dressmakers be willing to make fortunes more slowly, and with more regard to their workpeople.

In the meantime, it is impossible to wait and let a generation perish, and what is there that can be done?

St. Gabriel's Home is meeting the difficulty as far as it can by affording to the young women who live here full board and lodging, both for 9*s*. a week, without dinner, 7*s*. a week. But even these are only summer payments, in winter and slack time they are less, or nothing. Lodgers for a short time at the rate of 10*s*. a week. Standing, as it does, in the near neighbourhood of Regent Street, Oxford Street, and Tottenham Court Road, it is admirably suited to those who work at houses in those streets, and is in a neighbourhood where cheap, respectable lodgings are scarce. That it is appreciated is evident from the fact that twice the twenty-one beds which it contains could be easily filled.

Besides these beds, each with their red screen securing privacy to the occupant, there is a cheerful little sitting-room, and another room set apart for family prayer, and for private prayer, and meditation, double value to those whose life is spent in the constant talk and excitement of the shop workroom.

By good management and much care the expenditure of the Home is so arranged that the payments at their best cover, on an average, board, rates, and taxes, and with the help of an annual grant from the Confraternity of All Saints, the fire and lighting also. But the rent remains, the rent which it is evident at the present rate of their wages the young women's payments cannot cover, a rent of £250 per annum, towards which we earnestly ask for annual subscriptions. For donations we are very grateful, they have tided us through our hand-to-mouth existence hitherto, also for gifts in kind, vegetables, rabbits, fish, eggs, etc., or any article for housekeeping, or for old clothes for sale, but above all for annual subscriptions towards the rent. If that could be assured, what a load would be taken off the mind of those who manage St. Gabriel's. If that could be assured, the haunting fear of having to close the house and turn our young women again adrift in London might be dismissed. And the whole sum is but £590, towards which we have already, in annual subscriptions, £101 10*s*. May we not reckon on receiving, either in large or in small sums, in shillings or in sovereigns, the lacking sum from the readers of the 'Monthly Packet'?

Gifts in kind should be sent to the Sister Superior, St. Gabriel's Home, 34, Mortimer Street, London, W. Money to the Treasurer, Miss E. Duncombe, 49, Berkeley Square, London, W.

We then entrust this matter hopefully to all those who lead safe and sheltered lives, who keep no involuntary fasts, to whom London suggests either home, or a season of holiday and amusement, with its accompaniment of pretty new frocks. Then they need fear no haunting vision of

'Maidens young,
Who wrought in that dreary room,
With figures drooping and spectres thin,
And cheeks without a bloom;
And the voice that cried, "For the pomp of pride,
We haste to an early tomb."'

SHAKSPERE TALKS WITH UNCRITICAL PEOPLE.

XXIII.—HAMLET, PART I.

(*Supposed date* 1602–3 ; *published* 1603.)

THERE is something discouraging in attempting to say anything about this, the most discussed of all Shakspere's plays. The mass of existing Hamlet literature is already so great that it seems absurd, even presumptuous, to think of saying anything not already said fifty times. Moreover, when the ground is so thickly covered, it gives us an uneasy feeling that our ideas must be very crude and below the subject. Well, but never mind if they are crude, let us boldly find out what the play has to say to us at first hand, not through any one else's brains, however clever ; and if it has said the same to hundreds before us, we shall still feel it fresh and unhackneyed. It is worth while to carry along in our minds, the question why this play has such an inexhaustible fascination, that after all these years people are still disputing over the actions of the unhappy Prince of Denmark. Doctors are arguing about him as if he were a pet case, and we can mostly sympathise with the good clergyman who confessed that if Hamlet walked into the room, he should have more to say to him than to any of his parishioners ! It is far the most popular of the plays from the standpoint of actual representation. Managers say that it 'acts itself,' although the most finished art might be expended on it without bringing the performance quite up to an ideal one. It is strange that the play which goes deepest into mysteries, asks the most insoluble questions, and is in itself something of an enigma, should be thus the most popular, if people are really so shallow and frivolous as we are constantly told they are. To touch on all the points of interest which arise as we go through the play, would be impossible even in the briefest fashion within reasonable limits, and even without attempting this, we must divide our subject into two parts, considering Hamlet himself first and the rest of the characters on a future occasion.

We need not pause long over the origin of the story which is first known as a Danish Saga, then filtered through an Italian novel, translated into French, and from that into English. It was turned into a play now lost, before Shakspere made it his own. The earliest existing edition of the English translation was not published till 1608, but evidently Shakspere had the story in pretty much the same shape. Though he treated his original with even more than his usual freedom, re-shaping characters at his pleasure, and though

the 'Historie of Hamlet' is a gruesome tale of blood and wickedness, it is, all the same, interesting to see how it was worked up, and it does sometimes throw light on bits of the play which seem inconsistent, by showing the links which were in Shakspere's mind, though he does not explain them. For instance, the case of Claudius' usurpation is partly cleared up, when we find the brothers in the original, joint rulers of the kingdom, and there are other similar points. Even Shakspere could not transfer situations, and either alter or ignore what had led up to them, without being sometimes inconsistent and sometimes obscure in minor matters, and this has happened repeatedly in *Hamlet*, where the manifold beauty of the play has not been compatible with the barbaric simplicity of the old story. To turn the wild Hamlet of the Saga, half savage, half wizard, with his coarse cunning and cruelty, his double marriage and miserable death, into the Prince whom we all know so well, could hardly be done with perfect consistency in detail.

Before Hamlet actually comes on the scene, we begin to hear of him as the proper person to whom the apparition of the dead King should be reported, and by putting together scattered hints and statements, we get a sufficient idea of his life up to the opening of the play. It is strange that everything after his father's death is so dark and sad, while everything up to that point seems so bright. With a hero father, on whom to expend all his treasure of admiring affection, and who evidently truly loved his son, with a mother whom he believed to be the loving and gracious creature which she appeared, fully endowed with mental and bodily gifts, and culture to match them, and with bright prospects before him, how could Hamlet's childhood and youth be anything but sunny? He had companionship also, not living in cold isolation, but sharing the lively student life of Wittenberg, where he had one friend of friends 'to wear in his heart's core,' and also gay comrades to work and frolic with, no suspicion of their future treachery darkening his soul. Perhaps, too, some vision of the 'Rose of May,' the fair daughter of Polonius, may be imagined as already floating before the princely student, as he must surely have known Ophelia before his father's death. No doubt Claudius must always have been obnoxious, but not sufficiently important deeply to trouble the full tide of Hamlet's young life. It is well to realise this early radiance of his youth, so as to appreciate the subsequent contrast. If Shakspere had not expressly stated Hamlet's age, we should have thought of him as younger than thirty, and it still seems inconsistent with the unfinished college life and some other suggestions. But whatever his age, his life is full of hope and promise, when blow after blow comes down upon it, and crushes it ruthlessly. First comes the King's death. That such a nature as Hamlet's would find this alone hard to bear, let those answer who have had the glory and ideal of their childhood and youth taken from them at a stroke, but with him it

is complicated by torturing perplexity and the ghastly suspicion of foul play, which come to embitter his grief. Then comes the loss of his kingdom, already referred to. It is often assumed that Hamlet tamely submitted to be set aside and might have secured his rights at once by a vigorous exertion, but we are really told nothing about it, and though Hamlet abuses himself heartily for being slack in other respects, he has no sense of being remiss on this point, but rather deeply wronged. His position is truly an intolerable one. He finds himself not only excluded from the throne, but actually dependent on the usurper, whom, till now, he seems to have regarded as beneath contempt, his deepest feelings hurt, his taste continually offended, and no escape left for him. Then, worse than all, comes his mother's marriage. The agony of shame and grief which this causes him far outweighs his previous sorrow and disappointment, it seems to blacken not only his future, but even his past, his pure memories are poisoned, the mother he seemed to know has utterly disappeared, she never has been at all. In intense bitterness of soul, her son stands in the world which her deed has blighted for him, and feels life hardly to be endured. He turns for relief to the idea of going back to his studies, but even that is denied him. There is but one gleam of light in his sadness, and it comes from Ophelia. Though by moments, Hamlet feels his faith in womanhood destroyed, yet it would seem to come back when he is with the innocent girl who simply loves and trusts him, and however wretched he may be, it is still some consolation to see Ophelia, or write to her, trying to find fresh ways of expressing the old theme, 'I love you.'

Such is Hamlet when we first see his black-clad figure moving sadly among the gay courtiers, all apparently quite content with the new order of things. How all the parade and ostentation of the new King must jar on the sick soul watching it all, disgusted by Gertrude's attempts to disperse his melancholy till his indignation at her shallowness gets beyond his control. But when Claudius takes up the tale, every decent feeling becomes outraged. We do not know how far Hamlet's suspicions go at this stage, but with even a faint notion lurking in his mind that his uncle had in any way been connected with King Hamlet's death, what unutterable loathing must be aroused by the oily commonplaces which Claudius pours out so glibly! There is no help for it either but silent endurance, and we may notice that Hamlet never speaks to the King if he can avoid it. With the Queen, it is different; she is still his mother, though he 'would 'twere not so,' and against her express wish he will not insist on going back to Wittenberg. The noisy heartless crowd sweep away, eaving Hamlet free to relieve himself in one of the famous monologues of the play, which reveal to us the workings of his sorely-tried nature. Here we meet the first expression of the feeling which underlies his most famous soliloquy, the desire, so natural in great trouble, 'Let me die and escape this pain.'

At this time Hamlet is only recognising that he cannot die by wishing, and may not take his own life, he goes no further with the subject, turning to his ever-present cause of sorrow, his mother's fearful degradation in his eyes. He is so very lonely in his grief that we gladly welcome the arrival of good Horatio to whose fidelity Hamlet may freely unburden himself. The pleasure of seeing his friend again brightens Hamlet up for the moment, as he heartily loves and values Horatio, and sorely needs to love and trust some one just now, but the bitter present soon comes back to his mind. Taken in connection with other passages, there is a bitter significance in his remark to Horatio: 'We'll teach you to drink deep ere you depart,' for we can see that Claudius' excesses in this respect add to his hatefulness in Hamlet's eyes. We should like to know, as a matter of curiosity, whether anything had attracted Shakspere's attention to this subject of extravagant revelry, just at this time, whether, for instance, any such drunken scenes as disgraced the English Court a few years later, had come under his notice. It is possible that he merely meant to put his Hamlet, the image of intellectual superiority, into strong contrast with the half-brutal types of sensuality and self-indulgence. We may remark that the Hamlet of the 'Historie' murders most of his foes in their drunken sleep, without any compunction!

We should naturally expect Hamlet to be agitated on hearing that his father's ghost had appeared, but his agitation is complicated by feelings unknown to Horatio and the soldiers. They connect the warlike spectre with the martial preparations going on in the country, Hamlet sees in it a confirmation of his suspicions. Yet he masters his perturbation, and clearly and keenly questions the witnesses till he knows what they have seen in minute particulars, and then quickly determines to verify their story for himself while letting it go no further. This appearance of the old King, and the revelation which he makes to his son, constitute the turning-point in Hamlet's life, and consequently, of the play. Everything which he says, does, or leaves undone, after this event, is more or less affected by it, and has to be considered in relation to it. He goes to it calmly enough, no doubt anxious to understand the perplexed business and what it indicates, but sufficiently disengaged in mind to philosophise over the noisy revelry going on in the castle. Suddenly his reflections are cut short by the awful apparition which evidently startles Hamlet more than he expected, and through the whole of his address to the ghost, we trace the natural horror mixed with resolution not to be baffled in his efforts to penetrate this mystery. However much nature recoils from this contact with the supernatural, he forces himself to go through with it. At the same time he has no fear that the ghost can actually injure him, and the well-meant attempt of his anxious friends to keep him from following it only exasperates him. 'By heaven, I'll make a ghost of him that lets me,' he bursts out, more like one of his Viking ancestry than his philosophic self, and

boldly follows the retreating spectre. Here we see none of the slowness to act which is often conspicuous in him. When Fate says to Hamlet, 'Now or never,' he can be prompt enough, as his insight is usually clear as to what he should do, when he has to decide on the spot, but the unlucky thing is that Fate does not often supply us with this amount of pressure, and then Hamlet *cannot* put the screw on for himself. The ghost's terrible revelation thrills him to the heart's core, confirming his darkest suspicions, and adding horror unsuspected before, it touches both his affection and his pride, and all other feelings seem lost in fierce craving for revenge, as the idea of the perpetrator of this double outrage, the fatal 'smiling villain' rises in his mind, while the echo of the ghost's last sad, 'Hamlet, remember me,' is still vibrating in his ear. Stunned with horror, he hardly knows what to say when found by his friends to whom he cannot possibly explain the truth. The 'wild and whirling words' with which he tries to dismiss them, have a strange power of echoing through ones brain :—

> 'You, as your business, and desire, shall point you;—
> For every man hath business, and desire,
> Such as it is,—and for mine own poor part,
> Look you, I will go pray.'

Collecting himself with an effort, he does succeed in impressing on them the necessity for secrecy as to the events of the night, and warn them of a possible change in his demeanour in the future, which they are not to try and explain. Already, therefore, the idea of feigning madness to assist his designs of revenge has crossed his mind. In this stratagem he follows the action of the Hamlet of the 'Historie,' but with this difference, that the older Hamlet adopts it to avoid being murdered like his father, a peril which is always near him while his uncle lives. Now our Hamlet never seems to anticipate danger from Claudius till his voyage to England takes place, and his design in assuming 'an antic disposition,' seems to be rather to throw Claudius off his guard, though he never explains it. Even in his keenest excitement on the subject of revenge, it never occurs to him to walk straight up to Claudius and kill him in cold blood. That might be practicable for some natures, Laertes, for instance, but not for Hamlet. Moreover, the King generally seems to be pretty well guarded from sudden attacks.

So now we have reached the central situation of the play. Hamlet is face to face with the thing he has to do, feels that he ought to do it, and must do it, but has to find ways and means and occasion, and to bring himself up to the point. That is, the meditative philosopher and student has to transform himself into an executioner and even in appearance, into an assassin! Claudius may have deserved to die fifty times, but that does not make the actual taking of his life an easy matter to Hamlet. In the first shock of the ghost's disclosure

it seems an easy matter to abandon everything for revenge, but when the inevitable reaction comes, the thing takes a different complexion. The critics agree almost to a man, nowadays, in abusing Hamlet's weakness on this point; they talk of his procrastinations, his pretexts for avoiding his duty, and so on and so on, and we do not say they are wrong, but we wish they would remember two or three things. First, that the determined ruffian hero of the 'Historie,' though sticking to the idea of vengeance with true northern doggedness, yet takes his time over it quite as much as his modern namesake, allowing himself to be sent off to England, and delayed in various ways, so Hamlet's slowness was not invented by Shakspere. Secondly, if Hamlet had proceeded forthwith from the platform where he saw the ghost, and run Claudius through, we should have been badly off for a play, and thirdly, such a single-minded Hamlet would have appealed far less to our common human nature. For what is the story of every human soul to whom duty means anything at all, but a struggle between a sense, more or less clear, of what should be done, and natural disinclination to do it? Surely everybody not wrapped up absolutely in self-conceit and satisfaction, has been Hamlet some time or other, seeing duty clearly in a moment of exaltation, and shrinking back from it in the cold fit which follows, hating it, and catching at every reason for delaying the performance thereof, yet haunted by it, and abusing oneself secretly for neglecting it. With Hamlet, the case is put in the most extreme form, the duty being the most distasteful which could be laid on his peculiar nature, and requiring the strongest effort, but in other shapes it is one of the most universal of experiences, and perhaps this is one reason why Hamlet appeals to everybody, and is the most human of all Shakspere's very human creations.

The notes of time in this play are more than usually puzzling, as if Shakspere could not be troubled by making them agree. Now if the account of Hamlet's strange visit to Ophelia stood alone, we should have considered it as following closely on his vow to discard everything but revenge from his mind, and one last look and sigh, might well be the close of his ill-starred courtship. But it is clear that a considerable time intervenes, during which Hamlet gradually assumes the 'antic behaviour' he spoke of, which seems to consist in extreme depression of spirits varied by fits of wild excitement and incoherency. All the time, he tries to continue his visits to Ophelia, but is thwarted by Polonius' precautions, till at last he makes his way in, apparently hardly knowing what he wants or expects of her, but craving for another sight of his lost joy. He has to let her think him mad as the courtiers do, there is no help for it, but it seems to 'shatter all his bulk,' so to part from her.

One of Hamlet's peculiarities is the extreme irritation which the presence of Polonius always produces in him. There seems an instinctive antipathy between the deep thinking young philosopher

and the sententious cunning old politician, and we cannot honestly say that Hamlet preserves his princely courtesy as intact as we could wish, in their encounters. Polonius bores him so inexpressibly that he cannot help showing that he considers him an old fool, if he is Ophelia's father! Another side of the Prince's character reveals itself when his college comrades, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern make their appearance unexpectedly. They are not in his heart's core like Horatio, but he has many pleasant associations with them, he likes them and believes in their liking for him, so that he is, at first, unfeignedly pleased to see them. We notice that he does not play the madman with them, in this interview, he merely lets them see the natural sadness which oppresses him. Suddenly he begins to wonder why they had arrived exactly at this juncture, and their overdone professions quickly show him the truth, that the King has sent for them to spy on him. Hamlet is by no means an easy person to conspire against at all times. Although even Claudius owns him to be 'most generous and free from all contriving,' he has nevertheless a knack of divining what is plotted against him and confounding the intriguers, and when once his suspicions of double dealing are aroused, he is not to be lulled again into confidence. In this case, he keeps a close watch on his schoolfellows from the moment he sees that they are not dealing frankly with him. We should like to know whether his phrase of being 'most dreadfully attended' should be taken to mean that he is neglected even by his own servants in the usurper's court, or that he feels himself surrounded by spies at every turn? It will bear either meaning, but the latter seems the more likely complaint for Hamlet to make.

The arrival of the actors gives a turn to the conversation which threatened to become awkward for Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, and also presents Hamlet in quite another aspect. The weary Prince struggling with his heavy destiny gives place, for the moment, to the kindly and genial art critic, heartily interested in the players and their art. They are not to suffer because he is in trouble, nor be disappointed of any favour that he can show them, and he is interested to learn how the shiftings of fashion have affected them. As usual, he cannot refrain from mocking at Polonius, when that worthy joins him, and the difference between his reception of the actors and of his schoolfellows almost obliges him to give a broad hint to the latter that he is playing a part. Nothing could be more pleasant and gracious than Hamlet's demeanour to the troop of actors, and one only hopes that here Shakspere was painting from life, and that his royal and noble patrons behaved with as genial a courtesy, and snubbed any impertinent remarks as decidedly as Hamlet does Polonius' uncivil interruption. It would be interesting to know, too, if the play, of which Hamlet speaks had any real existence, and whether the Pyrrhus and Hecuba passages from it are Shakspere's own, or quotations from somebody else. The player must have had

a strong imagination to work himself up to tears over the description of Hecuba, but perhaps the slight cause for his emotion lends greater point to Hamlet's application of the incident. Apparently, while the recitation goes on, the idea of having the murder of Gonzago played before Claudius, enters Hamlet's mind, the details of the scheme being worked out later on when the players have retired. It is rather cool of him, by the way, to tell them not to make fun of Polonius, considering the bad example he sets on this point. But under all the pleasant ease of this scene, Hamlet has been restraining a strong tide of mingled feeling, and the instant he is alone, it breaks forth. The player's agitation over 'a fiction, a dream of passion,' is in bitter, stinging contrast to his own slackness in his great cause. It makes him suspect himself capable of any degree of degenerate baseness that he has delayed so long, remembering what kind of man he is sent to punish. Then with a sudden feeling, most natural and most pathetic, in all his vehemence, he turns against himself for finding relief in strong words, like a scolding shrew. He is disgusted to find himself so weak, yet, ah, poor human nature, it is one thing to own to a weakness, and quite another to become strong! But something Hamlet feels impelled to do, and the notion of testing the King by the proposed performance commends itself strongly to him. The impression of the Ghost's disclosure has become somewhat weakened, and the idea of a possible diabolical deception, which occurred to Hamlet before, now returns in greater force. We admit that he is not sorry to have an excuse for postponing direct action, yet there is much to be said for his plan of eliciting an unconscious confession of guilt from Claudius before dealing further with him. Nothing indicates what special occasion, on the day after the players' arrival, draws Hamlet's thoughts back to the subject of suicide, but he is evidently bent on thinking it all out in one of his lonely moments, while he is expecting the King to appear. From his own private case, his ideas now travel forward to a general survey of the woes of mankind, so many and so varied, and yet all so easily ended. And hereupon we reach perhaps the most widely-known passage in all Shakspere, Hamlet's most famous monologue. Most widely known, not best known, for it is not everybody who takes the trouble to study the wonderful words with anything like the attention they deserve, though most people are superficially familiar with them. There is hardly a line in the speech which has not passed into our common talk, and we are so used to the scattered jewels that it is really necessary sometimes to put them back into their proper setting and follow out the continuous course of Hamlet's, or rather Shakspere's, thought. That is, so far as it goes, for Hamlet's has certainly not exhausted his subject when he becomes suddenly aware of Ophelia's presence, and his meditations are naturally cut short. On the causes of Ophelia's appearance at this point, we shall have more to say later on, now we have only to consider how it affects

Hamlet. He has not seen her, we may suppose, since their silent interview, and now feels himself bound to keep up her belief in his madness, and to resist the opening for fresh love-making which she gives him by accusing him of being unkind to her. But it is hard to feign with a breaking heart. Does all English literature contain simple words more intensely pathetic than his, 'I did love you once,' and her, 'Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so?' The helpless misery of it all, the two who might have loved so happily and well, parted by such a gulf of wickedness, seems to cut Hamlet to the heart. He sees the hopelessness of it for Ophelia, even more than for himself. Here is a world of sin and wretchedness, nobody to be trusted, even the 'indifferent honest' bad enough, what can become of an innocent little creature like her in it? Better for her to be out of it altogether, in the shelter of the cloister safe from the indignities of this life. Naturally the distressed and frightened girl does not follow the connection of his strange words, not knowing what underlies this farewell, for such it really is. Suddenly the peculiarity of Ophelia's being there alone seems to strike Hamlet, and it looks as if one of his lightning-like intuitions revealed to him the scheme connected with her presence. It would be very satisfactory if we could find distinct warrant for the most effective bit of stage business which makes Hamlet at this moment catch a glimpse of Polonius who is concealed behind a curtain, but Shakspere really does not say anything about it. Still if in the last part of the interview, Hamlet is not absolutely addressing a concealed auditor, he certainly means his fierce harshness to go beyond Ophelia. His enemies do not get much by spying on him and using his poor little love as an instrument. The result of the interview is curiously different on the three who listen to Hamlet's ravings. Ophelia is convinced of his complete insanity, and is in despair for him and herself, Polonius sticks to his old opinion, and Claudius begins to think Hamlet more dangerous and less mad, than the world has believed him before.

After this scene of pathos and passion it is strange to meet Hamlet next in his character of art critic, laying down those principles of acting since recognised as fundamental. It has often been said that this conversation with the First Player has nothing whatever to do with the main story, but what a loss it would have been if any such like scruples had prevented Shakspere from inserting this unique little discourse on his own art. We wonder how far he ever saw his ideal of acting realised as he here sets it forth, and whether he could keep his company from the faults which he criticises.

At some previous point unnoted in the play, Hamlet has relieved his feelings by fully confiding in Horatio, and now justifies his doing so by that beautiful sketch of his good friend's character, which almost overpowers the modest man. Besides the comfort of having a sympathiser in Horatio, Hamlet also secures a second observer of the king's demeanour as the play is performed before him. There is only

one drawback to this play scene, it seems to bring us up to a climax before the time, and we cannot keep at that pitch of excitement. Like the trial scene in the *Merchant of Venice*, the end is almost a foregone conclusion, and yet we get as excited as if the upshot were entirely doubtful. In this case, we feel that the extreme tension of Hamlet's nerves affects ours, and we watch through his eyes. He sets himself deliberately to play the madman, the better to cover his close watch on the King, and we are bound to admit that he overdoes his part, and is in danger of betraying himself, being hardly able to control his own excitement. He treats Ophelia with a wild recklessness most distressing to the sad maiden, whose mournful little attempts to soothe him show that it is not possible for her to be offended by him. Under favour of his madness, Hamlet ventures on more daring allusions to his father's death and his mother's marriage than he has previously risked in the King's hearing, till the latter begins to take alarm, and gets suspicious by the time the Dumbshow and Introduction, elucidated by Hamlet's comments, have been represented. His sudden imperious turn on his nephew, asking whether there was no offence in the play, seems to suggest much as to the relations between them, and he evidently shrinks back from the unexpected freedom of Hamlet's reply, and the defiant significance of his, 'Your majesty, and we that have free souls, it touches us not.' All through this scene, our interest is not so much in what the characters say and do, as in what they are feeling. The protestations of the Player Queen jar even on Gertrude's stifled conscience, and Hamlet sadly notes how they affect her, even while he is concentrating his attention on Claudius as the crisis approaches, and the counterfeit murderer steps over the stage, uttering the charm-lines which have truly something magical in their electric thrill and rhythm.

> 'Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit, and time agreeing,
> Confederate season, else no creature seeing;
> Thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds collected
> With Hecat's ban thrice blasted, thrice infected,
> Thy natural magic and dire property,
> On wholesome life usurp immediately.'

If they are meant for Hamlet's own lines, we may fancy him whispering them over half audibly, and gazing on the King meanwhile with intense excitement. This is the climax. Claudius can bear no more, and regardless of prudence, he breaks off and rushes away, and in an instant the brilliant scene is deserted by all but Hamlet and Horatio, recovering from the strain of the previous moments as they best can. It leaves Hamlet in an almost hysterical condition, exultant at the success of his stratagem, but so thoroughly shaken by his own emotions, and the effort of restraining them, that he is hardly master of himself. This possibly prompts his desire for music, which might quiet his mind, and allow him to compose himself,

but our poor hero rarely gets the treatment suitable to his sorely tried spirits. Instead of music and sweet harmonies come the false voices of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, with their feigned friendship and peering curiosity, and Hamlet has to work off his agitation in puzzling and confounding them. Now he no longer cares to keep on any sort of terms with them and lets his contempt for them be plainly seen. He could more easily forgive their treachery than their clumsy efforts to work upon him, for nothing galls a man of Hamlet's mental power more than being supposed to be managed by distinctly inferior natures. This gives force to his acted parable of the musician's pipe. Is he, with all the complications of his nature, easier to be understood and used than this simple instrument which they admit they do not comprehend? He is more indignant with them than with Polonius, though he cannot resist trying to see how far that old gentleman will go in his efforts to humour him.

Darkness and light have not always the same effect on the nerves, and apparently Hamlet is just now in that strung-up condition when darkness and silence instead of calming or depressing, produce a sense of wild exaltation and power. At that moment, he feels equal to anything, but unluckily these moments are apt to pass as quickly as they come, and leave us as weak as before. Also there is a certain chill in the recollection that the next business is his interview with his mother, where he has to perform the difficult task of appealing to her conscience, without being carried away by his indignation into forgetting their relative positions. However hard, it has to be done, and Hamlet makes no attempt to evade it, but on his way to her, he comes across the extraordinary spectacle of Claudius endeavouring to pray, and therefore for once, unguarded. If Hamlet ever deliberately deceives himself, it is on this occasion. He could *not* bring himself up to the point of despatching his uncle then and there (and could we have forgiven him if he had thus taken Claudius unawares?) and forthwith he makes an excuse to himself of which he ought to be heartily ashamed and bolsters it up with big words to hide the fact that it is mainly a sham. Not absolutely one, for there is an unmistakable vein of fierceness, even possible cruelty, running somehow through Hamlet's nature, recalling his savage original, and we get a touch of it here. However, his feeling is only righteous indignation as he enters the Queen's room, and it is no wonder that her first words are bitter to him, the sacred name of father being profaned by her application of it to the doubly stained wretch whom he has just quitted. Can that extraordinarily foolish woman, Gertrude, really have expected to scold Hamlet into conformity to her wishes, that she shrinks terrified and screaming from his first resistance? It is an ill-timed scream, as foolish as Polonius' call for help when no help is near. As Hamlet instinctively stabs at the hangings, an idea crosses his brain that he has possibly caught his enemy here without expecting it, but he would know it was most unlikely, had he time to

think. Curiously enough, it is only at this point that he seems to accuse his mother of having had a hand in her first husband's death. He cannot yet afford any pity for Polonius thus reaping the fruit of his own intrusion, remorse for his death may come later, but just now Hamlet has only attention for one subject, a desperate attempt to penetrate his mother's deadened conscience. She seems at first absolutely hardened, so he has to begin by startling her, and then to prove what an utter fool she has been, before going on to her crime. Bitter are his words in truth, bitter with the long-suppressed feelings of these months of torture. All the eloquence he can command prompted by his undying affection, expresses itself in his description of his father, and in forcing the contrast between her two husbands home to the reluctant Queen. No woman not absolutely hardened could listen unmoved to his burning words, and there is still some capacity for feeling left in Gertrude, some possibility of repentance, although characteristically it is chiefly displayed by entreaties to Hamlet to stop his too truthful words. But Hamlet is not going to stop, his torrent of remonstrance is only checked by the startling vision of the ghost revisiting the halls in which he had lived. At once Hamlet's conscience finds a reason for this fresh visitation in his own slowness to carry out his father's will, but the ghost seems also to come to protect Gertrude from the effects of extreme terror. Somehow Hamlet himself appears more agitated and distressed by the renewed sight of the apparition than he was on the former occasion, and is perplexed besides by finding that the ghost is invisible to Gertrude, though the honest soldiers and Horatio had seen him plainly. He discovers to his horror, that she is disposed to set everything down to his madness, and that his passionate efforts will all be thrown away. This he must prevent if it may be done, so by a great exertion of earnestness and self-control, he manages to show her that he is not mad, but only appealing to her better self to repent and save her soul. So far he succeeds that she no longer regards his pleading as insanity, but owns its penetrating power, and more than this he can hardly expect of her. He tells her what she should do, and has to leave the rest to her, not without experiencing a bitter pang at the strange reversing of their positions, which forces him to be cruel only to be kind. He only requests one kindness of his mother, to leave Claudius still to think him mad, and we cannot make out that she ever disregards this entreaty. We should like to know how Hamlet finds out that he is to be despatched to England, but once he has got a hint of the intention, it is easy for him to foresee that Polonius' death will form a good excuse for sending him from Denmark. So, like his original, he has to make the best of the situation, evidently meaning not to be long before he gets back again, and determined to keep a sharp eye on the doings of his fellow-travellers, really his gaolers. If Rosencrantz and his comrade expected to have an easy time with their prisoner, they must be undeceived by the poor

success of their attempt to bully him into telling them where he had placed Polonius' body. In spite of their feigned unconsciousness, the cowardly and treacherous pair must wince inwardly as Hamlet vividly paints the real nature and function of such court 'sponges' as they are. However, the upshot of all is that Hamlet, being virtually a prisoner, has no course open to him but to go on board ship for England, with the uncomfortable persuasion that some deep treachery is being plotted against him. Exactly how it comes about that we next find him on a plain in Denmark, is not specified, but we know that Shakspere never troubled himself much to arrange these trifling points, and the real object of the short scene is to show the effect produced on Hamlet's mind by meeting with Fortinbras' troops going to their senseless campaign in Poland. Like everything else, this incident connects itself with the abiding subject of Hamlet's thoughts, and arouses the old bitter sense of miserable disgust with himself for leaving his work so long undone, but his consciousness of his own failure does not bring him any nearer to his aim.

We have now to fill up the story of his adventures from various hints and disconnected statements till we see him again. Apparently he re-embarks with his company, and at sea has plenty of time to consider the desirability of getting to know the nature of the commission carried to England by his ex-friends, so likely to have some reference to himself. A fit of that restless excitement which often becomes intolerable during a sleepless night at sea, raises his desire to a climax, and for once he yields to an impulse, and finds it his best wisdom. It is clever enough of him to secure the important packet in the dark, and in the same fashion to restore it after substituting an order for the execution of his faithless guardians for his own death-warrant, but when Hamlet is relating the story afterwards to Horatio, could not Shakspere have refrained from that pun on the 'asses,' which seems to have had a fatal attraction for him? Whatever Hamlet's intentions may have been as to disposing of himself in England, they are interfered with by the attack of the pirates on his ship, whereupon he fights like a true son of the Vikings, and suddenly finds himself left alone with the pirate crew. In point of honesty they seem to compare rather well with his late associates, and he has little difficulty in getting himself taken back to Denmark, where he intimates his return to the astounded King, and summons Horatio to his side before reappearing in the court. At this point we see him again. How long Hamlet has been absent does not seem clear, but whether for short time or long, strange things have happened since he departed, which he has now to learn as he and Horatio come strolling into the churchyard where Ophelia's grave is being dug. The contrast between the carelessness of the custom-hardened old Sexton, and his melancholy employment, would strike a less thoughtful man than Hamlet, but for him the scene has a sort of fascination. Forgetting his own pre-occupation he plunges into a

strain of moralising, half-amused, half-provoked by the sententious coolness of the gravedigger, who, it may be noted, is the only man in the play who holds his own with Hamlet in words. It is a very ghastly aspect of death which thus fixes the Prince's imagination; painful, even degrading, and this feeling is intensified when he recalls what the man was in life whose skull he now holds in his hands, and contrasts the witty, laughing jester, associated with no idea of gravity, with this poor mockery of humanity. It is horribly repulsive, as the merely physical side of death must needs be, but he is not left long to indulge in these gruesome reveries. The approach of the funeral procession startles him and bids him withdraw a little if he will not be recognised at present. Thus watching he becomes aware of Ophelia's piteous end. Perhaps he hardly knew how much he loved her, nor how closely she was bound up with his life from which he tried to tear her, till now when she is severed from him by death. The stifled passion leaps up into wildest life again, and the extravagance of Laertes' expression of grief produces a startling effect on Hamlet's temper; as he confesses afterwards, he is in a towering passion. Love, grief and jealousy combine fiercely together, and he maddens at the idea that any one could mourn Ophelia as he does, or pretend to have loved her as well! What a comment on the words which so wrung her heart: 'I did love you *once*.' But in all his passion Hamlet has no desire to injure Laertes, whom he really likes, and he is startled at the savage attack which the young Dane makes upon him. Naturally Laertes, thirsting for revenge, welcomes the chance of killing Hamlet there and then, without the expedients of the poisoned sword and cup, but this is not allowed him, and the funeral has no such conclusion. When the fever of passion has subsided, Hamlet deliberately makes up his mind that he has not treated Laertes well, and casts about how to be reconciled to him, strangely unconscious of Laertes' real feelings towards him. With all his genius Hamlet is never good at appreciating another person's point of view, and he is so immersed in his own projects of revenge, that it never occurs to him that Laertes may be seeking the same thing. Moreover Polonius' death was so entirely by chance, and Hamlet feels himself so innocent as regards Ophelia that it does not strike him that Laertes can possibly consider him as the murderer of his father and sister.

When Hamlet finds himself at home again, he seems possessed by a feeling that the crisis of his fate is coming at last, though he knows not in what shape. Obviously it is coming to be now or never with him very rapidly, for he can only reckon on the interval which must elapse before the King hears from England of the death of his envoys. A mysterious weight lies on him, not the wild 'fey' feeling which Shakspere sometimes shows in his characters when their doom is approaching, but a dim presentiment. Yet he will not let it bear him down, for though intensely sensitive he is not weakly super-

stitious, therefore let it come, whatever it is, 'there is a special providence in the fall of a sparrow,' 'the readiness is all.' Up till now, the readiness is just what he has wanted. Feeling thus, he can still notice with amused contempt Osric's utter absurdities, and answer him in his own jargon till the poor 'waterfly' has to fall back on the ordinary language of humanity. The proposed fencing match falls in so opportunely with Hamlet's wish to be friends with Laertes that he readily accepts the trial, even though the King has arranged it, and Horatio would have it postponed.

So the witnesses of the last scene begin to gather in the castle hall, and again the interest lies not so much in what we actually see until the climax is reached, as in the feelings which we know are in the breast of those present. There is the King determined that this time his scheme for ridding himself of his nephew shall not fail, hiding his desperate anxiety under a profusion of fulsome words and flattery, there is Laertes crushing down the natural repugnance of a man of honour to treacherous assassination by thoughts of his vow of vengeance, there is easy-going Gertrude, thinking all will be well if her son and Laertes makes friends, Horatio only caring for the whole business as its affects his beloved master and friend, and Hamlet himself, in his perfect unconsciousness of any plot against him, reminding us of some stately stag walking into a snare. We think unjust reproach has been cast on him for seeming to make a false excuse to Laertes when asking to be reconciled to him. In Hamlet's mind their quarrel only dates from Ophelia's funeral, when he was temporarily insane with passion, and he therefore pleads with Laertes not to think that he has willingly wronged him. Of course Laertes looks at it quite differently, and is rather puzzled how to answer, not being a sufficiently accomplished hypocrite to assume entire satisfaction, but his guarded response is quite enough for Hamlet, thinking no evil and suspecting nothing. The interest of the fencing match so changes for the moment Hamlet's usual thoughts that he brightens up into what we might fancy he used to be in his Wittenberg days, eager, pleasant, and cheerful, enjoying the consciousness of his own skill, and liking to try it against a worthy antagonist. His careless question, 'These foils have all a length?' takes a significance when we remember the deadly advantage which is being taken of his unsuspiciousness. As we have been told that Laertes' weapons are 'rapier and dagger,' we must understand the foils to be swords, properly prepared, 'abated' for this sort of combat, but very different from fencing foils of our days. Remembering how Shakspere, in the person of Mercutio, made fun of the elaborate style of fencing then coming into fashion, in which an exchange of swords would have been nearly impossible, we rather suppose he intended this match to be one of the older fashioned sword play, which laid down rules by which one combatant might, in various ways, attempt to possess himself of his antagonist's sword,

at the same time running a chance of losing his own. As we hear nothing of daggers, we imagine they were dispensed with on this occasion. Laertes has doubtless prepared his deadly weapon beforehand, trusting to luck that Hamlet will not notice any difference in it, and now seems to select it from the others with some deliberation. Meantime the King is preparing his part of the plot, and if Hamlet were paying much attention to him just now, he might be surprised at the extravagance of his majesty's interest in his success. So begins this strange trial of skill, looking so friendly, innocent and graceful, a well-matched pair exercising an accomplishment under the eyes of a circle of friends and relatives, and yet what a depth of treachery lies underneath! As the fencers step back to their places after the first bout, the King who seems far from sure that Laertes will succeed in touching his opponent at all, now seizes his opportunity for offering Hamlet the poisoned cup, but to his dismay, it is set aside for the moment, untasted. Thus it comes within the reach of Gertrude, who is suddenly moved to show her interest in the match by pledging her son as the second fencing bout is concluded. This is utterly unexpected by Claudius, but he cannot effectually stop her without betraying himself, and she has swallowed the draught before he can interfere. Now, Laertes, not without some effort, resolves to carry out his deadly purpose, and exerting all his skill, succeeds in inflicting a wound. Then ensues a brief scuffle, in which Hamlet masters Laertes' sword while losing his own, and returns the wound he has received. Only conscious of a slight hurt himself, he is ready to go on, when he sees on one side his mother sinking, as it seems, in a swoon, and on the other, Laertes staggering from him, ghastly and death like! The King's false excuse is not wanting, but Gertrude has just strength enough to gasp out the truth before she dies. Now Hamlet rises to the situation, promptly taking the command, turning at once to discover the treachery and prevent the escape of the traitor, when Laertes' dying voice reveals to him the real state of the case. The touch of death has swept away all Laertes' delusions, and shown him the foul nature of his deed. Now Hamlet's long hesitation is over, though his own life is cut short, he has still time to do that which has been lying on him so long, and the fit weapon is in his hand, so with one spring and thrust he avenges himself and his father on the wretched Claudius. He leaves him no loophole of escape, forcing the poison on him, lest the sword might fail, and at last his work is done, the thing he could not make himself do is accomplished under the pressure of swift coming death. For his life is ebbing fast. Laertes dies uttering an entreaty for mutual forgiveness, and Hamlet feels that he is following. He would gladly tell the world the meaning of this strange story, but his strength fails, and he can only turn to his one friend to do it for him. In his despair, Horatio would gladly die with him, and Hamlet gathers up the remnant of his strength to wrench the fatal cup from him, and then to utter that

most pathetic pleading that Horatio would endure life in this harsh world to do him one last service by clearing his memory from reproach. He hears the warlike sounds which announce the coming of Fortinbras, and with the second sight of the dying, he sees that Denmark will not be left kingless, and sinks content.

'The rest is silence.'

Yet after following his career, we may turn back and ask ourselves whether we have at all grasped the secret of his enduring charm? We shall surely agree that no successful, strong-willed, prosperous hero, bending all before him, was ever so much bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh as our Hamlet, with all his faults. And if we are honest, shall we not own to having his nature more or less, in our inmost hearts, so that we feel his failures and weaknesses as our own?

Well for us if, like him, we succeed, even at the last.

CONSTANCE O'BRIEN.

OTTAVIA.

November 14th.

'SIGNORINA, the father of Ottavia has just been to say that she is very bad, and the doctors have given up hope. And will you go and see her?'

This was the melancholy message brought by our maid with my breakfast a few mornings ago.

I was not surprised, for the girl Ottavia Cecchi had been more or less ill all the time that I had known her. But I was sincerely distressed, as I knew she had had the keenest desire for life, the greatest dread of death; therefore it was with very great pity that I started to go to her.

As I walked through the narrow Roman streets I called to mind all that I had known of the girl, not that there had been anything remarkable in her, or in her circumstances; but the fact of her being now called upon to face the 'great Reality,' invested her with an indescribable interest, and set me wondering how the 'Ego' evolved by a small amount of education, a great deal of suffering, and the average quantity of religious instruction (in Catholic Italy) would view its near approach.

It was about two years ago, in the Angeli ward of the large hospital here, that I first saw Ottavia. My sister and I had got into a habit of going there as often as possible; teaching one small cripple, 'Ida,' to read; lending books to those patients who could already do so, and distributing custards and oranges to those who from ignorance or illness could not thus find '*divertimento*.'

This day, after giving the usual lesson to Ida (with the equally usual doubtful success), I walked up the ward to release my sister from whatever relation of ghastly maladies she might happen to be listening to. I found her, however, by the bed of a pretty-looking girl with red hair, and well-formed small white hands, whose great desire, it seemed, was to learn French, and who was entreating us to give her lessons. In spite of perception of the fact that many requests of this kind would, if acceded to, entail our taking up a permanent abode in the hospital! we (having faith in the non-intelligence of the majority) consented willingly to give this seeker after culture as much help as a grammar, and an occasional half-hour of instruction would convey. Then with the invariable '*a rivederci*' moved away. This was the beginning of my acquaintance with Ottavia.

After that I saw her often; she was decidedly intelligent, and got on very fairly with her French. The daughter of poor people, it was important that she should fit herself as rapidly as possible for in some

way earning money, the wish therefore to become telegraph-clerk or schoolmistress was strong in her; but suffering as she was from an hereditary malady which entailed constant operations, her studies had been constantly interrupted, and it was altogether, as she said '*una desperazione.*'

She was now recovering from an attack of her malady, and not long after was able to be taken home, leaving a pencil note with Ida, asking me to go and see her. This I did, and as much as possible I continued trying to help her. Aided by friends, I sent her in the summer to the seaside hospital, where she was very happy, and well looked after by the good Dominican Sisters. I tried, too, to influence her morally by giving her that very lovely little book by 'Francesca,' the 'Story of Ida,'—also the four Gospels, an edition of which has been published with the authorization of the Roman Church, and copies of which may be had for half a franc a piece. Again—and here I blamed myself for the often unnecessary vehemence with which I had tried to convince the poor child of the iniquity of certain '*egoismi*'—I had inveighed against the selfishness of seeking to stay two months at the sea, when by so doing she must prevent some other unfortunate having even one month there—against the meanness of attending the Sunday afternoon catechism with a view to obtaining the 'dot' given on their marriage to girls who should have done so with regularity (a meanness often paralleled by English Sunday-school children, whose assiduity becomes remarkable only when a treat is approaching)—most of all did I denounce that terrible selfishness of marrying when oneself suffering from, or marrying with any one suffering from any hereditary disease, thus incurring the responsibility of bringing into life unfortunates to bear in their turn the weight of pain, and live the life of incompleteness. I know not if I did any good in thus inveighing; I fear that I failed in putting myself in her place, in viewing things from her stand-point. Why is it that, however well one knows the truth of the belief, that 'there is not one absolute Right for all alike; but Right is relative in proportion to individual development,' one yet constantly fails to act upon it? Perhaps it were too much to expect that Ottavia should have wished another child to take her turn at the seaside; perhaps the 'dot' figured less in her imagination, and the catechism more, than she gave me reason to suppose; and perhaps her hankering after fine garments may have come, not from wishing to gain offers of marriage thereby, but from the Italian instinct not to *scomperire* (make a poor figure) which ensures on the part of all respectable poor the most decent and even ornamental attire when walking out, though at home they may have no attempt at firing, and no food but '*pasta.*'

'My poor Ottavia,' I reflected, 'I fear that after all I have not been of much use to you. And now, I fear, it is too late.'

I ring at the bell, and the door being unlatched with a jerk from above, push it open, and pass up the dark steep stairs. On the

landing I am met by Ottavia's mother; the poor woman looks worn with fatigue and anxiety, and she even—a rare occurrence in courteous Italy—omits all enquiry after my health, simply answering my question as to Ottavia's condition with,' We had a consultation yesterday, and they said there is no hope. But please come in, Signorina, she will have great pleasure in seeing you.'

I entered the sick room; it was perfectly neat (the whiteness of the beds in Italy becomes a nightmare to house-hunting strangers). Ottavia, who was propped up with many pillows, looked pretty, and scarcely more ill than usual, though her waving red hair was bound back under a white handkerchief, which is a sign I have got to recognise (whether intentional or not, I do not know) that the wearer will never dress her own hair again. I sat down near her, and after answering her enquiries as to my health—*she* did not forget!—and being told that it did not do her harm, but gave her pleasure, to talk, I asked her to tell me all about herself.

'Ah, Signorina,' she began, and I noticed in her eyes a far-off look, and in her voice a recitative monotony of tone, which had never been there before; 'Ah, Signorina, I am very very ill. Father had the *professori* to consult together yesterday, and they say that there is no more any remedy. There is a swelling come in my throat; and, besides, since the operations I have not been able to digest food; so you see, I have got weaker and weaker.'

'Poor child! but do you know, you look just the same; you are not much thinner, and your voice is quite strong.'

'I know; but that is because for the moment I do feel better. And why I feel better is because they brought me the Sacrament this morning. I asked them to, because I knew the doctors were right; so the priest came at six, and since I have felt much better'—she paused a moment, then continued—'But still I am going to die, Signorina. Mother cries about it. Ah, you should see how she and father cried last night. But I cannot cry; perhaps a little here, in my heart; but, believe me, Signorina, I am not at all sorry now to die, it does not pain me any more, and so I do not cry, Perhaps it is the malady; it is not that I have a hard heart?'

The poor mother went crying from the room.

'But no,' I answer, 'you haven't a hard heart, Ottavia. Isn't it because you know that whatever God permits must be the best thing for you? and so you can't feel sorry. *Vero?*'

'Verissimo,' she answered, with emphasis. 'I see, too,' she continued after a pause, during which I sat still looking at her, 'I see, too, why it is better that I should die; I could never be healthy, and God thinks sixteen years of pain have been long enough, so now I may be born again, for we *are* born again, aren't we? and this time without *difetti*.'

Signora Cecchi now re-entered the room, and came and sat at the foot of the bed. Ottavia looked at her, and continued—

'Of course for the mother I am sorry, the time will seem long to her till she sees me again; twenty years is a long time, you know! But for me it will not be at all long, for one knows that when one is an angel, there won't be time like now, but twenty years will only seem like one day. Like one day,' she repeated, 'and then I shall see her again.' She paused a moment and then continued, 'Yes, it is much better I should die; and since my dream I have been really glad that I shall do so.'

'What dream, *cara?*' I asked. 'Tell me about it.'

'I have had two,' she answered, 'two. One about my grandmother I had more than six weeks ago; but the lovely one, the one that makes me glad to go, I had only two nights back, the night before this swelling came.'

'But tell me about the first,' I interrupted. 'You say you had it six weeks ago?'

'Yes, it was six weeks ago last Saturday, and to-day is Tuesday—so there are only ten days more.' She said this slowly, as if she were thinking aloud, then raised herself higher on her pillows; and I grieved to see how much strength she still had, knowing how great must be the suffering that should reduce it to extinction. Looking sometimes at me, and sometimes at the strip of sky visible above the roofs of the opposite houses, she began—

'I was here, and it was night, when a woman, dressed all in white but distressed-looking, came to me. She began to scold me, saying, "Why do you give so much trouble to my child," and then I knew that she was my grandmother, who was displeased because I had been cross with mother the day before; and I said that I was sorry, and that I had not meant it, but that it was my illness. She looked at me, and cried, "*Ah poverina! sei ammalata,*" and then she took me in her arms, and cried over me, and kissed and kissed me. Then another woman came in, who was so beautiful that I hardly knew her for my aunt, as she had died *so* ugly from a dreadful illness. She too kissed me, and was sorry for me; then by-and-by they turned to go, saying, "*Addio per ora, fra due mese verrai da noi*" (good-bye for the present, in two months you shall come to us).'

She lay back, and was silent; I, waiting for her to speak, was silent too, wondering what the other dream, the one which had made her glad to go, would be like. Apparently she guessed my thoughts, for rousing herself she said: 'I will tell you my consoling dream now, Signorina; it is a very long one, and I don't think really it was a dream, for I was not asleep, only *assoppita*. For me, it was a vision. . . . I was at a window; outside was a large *cortile*, and beyond I saw a church, *ma grande grande, non lo posso dire!* My mother was with me, and we passed from the window, crossed the cortile, and entered the church. Mother did not want to go in, she was afraid; but I wanted to, and was not at all afraid. Inside it was so so beautiful; so many lights, and the church was of a size,

but of a size that you can't imagine! whilst of the people there were an incredible quantity! Mother was still afraid, and wanted to go away, but I persuaded her to stop, and we walked round the chapels and looked at the lovely pictures. Everybody was silent—*zitti, zitti;* but some were crying quietly. . . . At last we went and sat down on one of the benches; in front of us was that *monaca*, the one who was ill in the spring, but who recovered, you know, Suor Brigita, and beside me was a woman who was very, but very, good; and who kept saying, "I hope I may go first, I want to so much, so much!"'

'And who was she, Ottavia?' I asked.

'I cannot tell you, Signorina, I only know that she was most extraordinarily good. . . . And then I saw that in the top of the church, where the altar always is, up the three steps, you know, was a table like a tribunal, and the people went up one by one, and stood before it. Behind the table were three Signori. In the middle was Christ, and on each side of Him were these two others, like warriors, who each had a book. Behind there were all Seraphims, and the light, it was most wonderful, like the electric light, or the fireworks on S. Giovanni. Soon the Suor Brigita got up, and went before the table; and that good woman wanted to go after her; but she was told that it was not yet for her to go—but it was for me. So I passed her, and holding my mother's arm, went up the church, ascended the three steps, and came before the table. Then they told my mother she must leave me, it was not yet for her to come; so she went, very sad, and I remained standing alone there, yet not at all afraid.

'Then Christ spoke, and every one in the church stood up. He gave a long *predica*, but long long! He said that we were all just *esseri* (beings), that God saw no difference between princes and poor people, monks and non-religious; but it was whether we had wanted to be good or not good. He said, too, that each would have perfect justice given him, but that no lying was possible, and no excuses; only truth. . . . And then He spoke to the two Signori, and they looked in their books, and I knew that one book had all our goodness, and the other all our badness written in it. They looked at the books, and it seemed as if they did not know what to decide. One said, "*Va*, they are only *peccatucci*" (trifling sins); and the other, "She has been so ill, and she is so young, only sixteen!" And Christ said to me, "It is so; they are only little sins, and you did not will to do them. But yet, the just thing must be done." "Listen, child," He said, and so kindly, "you know how to write?" "*Sì, Signore*," I answered. "You shall have this little *pena* then, to make it quite just, for ten days you shall write; copy in the book; that will not hurt you, will it?" And an angel came, a lovely angel, and led me away through long long passages, all quite silent. Once he drew me to the side of him by my arm, and I saw that near me there had been a horrible devil; but of course with him it could not harm me. At last we reached a room, almost a house though, but of glass, all transparent. He took me in, and I saw a very

old priest writing at a table in a large book. I think he must have finished, for he disappeared, and the angel made me sit at the table, and gave me the pen; then he blessed me, and went out, and I knew that I was to write for ten days. I did not feel alone though, for the angel stood outside, so that I could see him always there through the transparent walls.'

'And what did you have to write?' I ask.

'I do not remember much; perhaps I did not understand. Outside the book I knew there was written something about "*remittere peccati*," and inside one page was always full of writing, and the opposite empty for me to copy in. Every page began with "Ego," and I saw often the words "Adoramus Christus" in big, long letters; whilst every page finished with "Gratia Deo."'

'Dear, that is very beautiful,' I say. 'I am so glad, for now you can always think of the lovely church.'

'Yes; and it consoles me so much,' she interrupts; 'it is all so very real now.'

'But, Ottavia,' I ask, wondering at the omission of all mention of her—'was the Madonna not there?'

'No, she was not there, but, *secondo me*, she was *assunta*, for there were all the clouds like you see in the pictures.'

'You mean that she had gone to Paradise? And you, when your ten days *pena* are over, you will go there too.'

She only smiled assent; and for several minutes no one spoke. At length she broke the stillness—

'Signorina,' she said, looking quietly at me, 'I was rather *in pensiero* about you after my dream. I wanted to know if you would come to Heaven, as you are not of our Church. So I asked the priest, and he consoled me; he said yes, every one who wished to serve God in doing good would come to Heaven.'

'Only I, as Protestant, shall have a big *pena* first, *vero*? But thank you, dear; it was nice of you asking and caring. Though, you know, one must remember that Christ said, "Be ye therefore perfect," not "Be ye Pharisee or Sadducee"; and I believe it is the same now; we are not told "Belong to this or that Church," but always this, "Be ye perfect!" But I must go now, good-bye till to-morrow; think of your vision, and thank you for telling me about it.'

'Come back soon,' she answered, and promising to do so, I left the room, followed by Signora Cecchi.

The poor woman then told me that the swelling in the throat was only one of many, and all internal; therefore any cure was out of the question—she might die any moment in one of the crises of sickness, or she might linger another fifteen days, dying from starvation. Words of consolation were hopeless in the face of her distress at this terrible prospect; one could only let her cry, reminding her at times of the girl's own courage and content. Then again promising to return the following morning, I left her.

I went early next day and found Ottavia much the same, and as anxious to talk as ever. An uncle had come from the country, from a village about twenty miles off, and having done most of the journey on foot 'because he is poor, but so fond of me,' Ottavia explained. She was now expecting, and with the greatest eagerness, a certain Flavia, a poor woman, the friend of her mother, and who was considered to be a saint. They began to tell me about her; how, since she had an old mother to support, and only earned money by doing straw-plait, she was not able to give much in charity, which made her unhappy.

'So this is what she does,' said Ottavia; 'she goes every Saturday the round of the *paese*, wet or fine, hot or cold; and everybody gives her something, however little; perhaps a halfpenny, perhaps only two *centesimi*, but all together it makes something. Then she takes it once a year to the Convent of the Sacro Cuore, and it goes to make a *festa*.'

'Think of her walking all those miles, with her *treccia* (straw-plait) in her hands,' exclaimed Signora Cecchi.

'But she never talks of religion, you know,' continues Ottavia; 'she never preaches to people, not even when men swear, she only tries to get them in a better humour.'

'She takes the Holy Communion every morning,' adds Signora Cecchi.

'But,' interrupts Ottavia, 'she is such a saint, that if there is anything that ought to be done anywhere, she will dispense with going to Church, even with the Mass.'

'Then, indeed, she must be a saint, Ottavia!' I answer, 'not to care about laying up "*meriti*" of her own, but to prefer simply going about helping those who need her, is really and truly being a saint.'

'*Vero?*' Ottavia answered, when the door opened, and her uncle putting in his head announced, 'Here is Flavia!'

A somewhat short and bent woman of middle age, with a face remarkable for its intense peace of expression, entered the room. A fall a few years back had injured her spine, and left her slightly deformed, though not sufficiently so to affect her face, the features of which were so well-cut as to merit Ottavia's definition of 'beautiful.'

She came in quietly, as if it were the right place for her; and, in fact, it was easy to see that where there were trouble and suffering, there it was natural that Flavia should be. I was introduced to her as *La* Signorina, and told her how glad I was that she was come to help Ottavia, who lay looking at her with great affection, and asked her immediately to pray that she might have courage to the end.

'But certainly, *cara*,' was her reply.

'That is all I ask,' Ottavia continued. 'The pain, the weariness are so great, that sometimes my courage escapes. If only God will give me patience!'

'Poor child,' said Flavia, gently, adding with her peaceful smile, 'You are certain to have it, quite certain.'

'Do you know even the doctor cried yesterday,' Ottavia continued; 'he cried, and I had to encourage him, he had too much heart, poor man. But, Flavia, now you are here, it will be better; you will stay all the time, won't you?'

The usual 'But certainly,' was her reply; she knew that she would be much needed.

News of her mother were now asked and given, and then we got on the subject of dreams Ottavia relating the first one that had come to her, when Flavia said, 'I will tell you a very wonderful vision a friend of mine had. It was a long time ago, for I was only a girl, but I remember it quite well. Elisa was young too, and very lovely; taller and stronger than I, and very charming. She was about seventeen, I think, when a man asked her in marriage, but she did not wish to marry him; he was not good, so he gave her great "*dispiaceri*," so great that she became ill, left off eating, and did not get up from her bed.

'Her mother did not think there was much the matter, she had always been so healthy; but for seven days she did not get up, or eat, though they were staying away from home, and it was not convenient to be ill. Then one night, it was Tuesday, she was awoke by a hand being laid on her arm. She sat up in bed, and saw that the Christ on a large crucifix by her bed had laid His hand on her arm, and was looking at her. "You must go home," He said, and on Friday at two you shall be with Me." (*Venerdì alle due, sarai con me.*)

'When her mother came in the morning, Elisa told her that she must take her home. "But why?" said the mother, "you must get better first." "No," she replied, "the crucifix said I must go home." They tried to persuade her, but could not succeed; she told them her vision, and they took her home.

'Friday came, she was weak, but quite herself; talked to her friends, and had a clock put where she could see it, and know how the time went. The priest and the doctor were there watching . . . it drew near the hour of two; she looked and smiling said, "In five minutes I shall go," and as the clock struck, quite quietly, and still smiling, she went.'

Flavia was herself smiling her usual peaceful smile, she did not seem to see anything to be surprised at, or to be doubted in her story Her realisation of the fact of the supernatural was so great, that the miraculous to her was but to be expected; and she evidently had no doubt as to the fulfilment of the dream of Ottavia.

Yet all the cases of like illness that I have come across in the hospital, terminated only after two, or even three months of suffering, even, though the patients were weaker than Ottavia now is. In nine days, however, we shall know if such presentiments come true or not.

* * * * *

Tuesday, Nov. 16th.

For a week I have been shut up in the house with a bad cold,

and consequently have only been able to hear about Ottavia. She keeps the same; a little better one day, worse the next. I wrote and asked the Mother Superior of those Dominican Sisters to send, if possible, some of them to see Ottavia; but I hear they have not been. However, as Flavia is always with her, that does not really signify—no one could be better than Flavia. Whenever Ottavia suffers most, she reminds her of her Church, and constantly exclaims, '*Oh, se potessi io entrarci nei tuoi piedi*' (If only I might enter in your footsteps), so that the child can never feel alone. She also reads her bits of the 'Imitation' which I marked for her. Ottavia sends me many messages, and reads herself any note I write her.

* * * * *

Thursday, Nov. 18th.

Ottavia died this morning. So her dream has come true, and '*fra due mese*' she has gone.

Flavia came to toll me, and to ask if I were able to go and see her *vestita* (dressed). I had meant anyhow to have gone to her to-day, as my cold was better; so towards five o'clock I went.

As I mounted the stairs of their house, I met the Mother Superior of the Dominican Sisters coming away. She had been crying; and began at once to say how very sorry she was that her Suore had not been able to go to Ottavia whilst she lived; but that they themselves had been in trouble, having had an ammalata amongst them.

'One of yourselves?' I ask; 'how sorry I am.'

'Yes, it was Suor Brigita,' she answered.

'And how is she now?'

'She died on Monday,' was the answer. And I remembered that in Ottavia's dream Suor Brigita had gone up to the *tribunale* before her, and to-day was Thursday. Somehow I did not feel surprised.

The outside Ottavia looked very peaceful; a faint smile on her lips, and the pink garment in which she was dressed, making her look as if the real Ottavia were still there, and would any moment turn and speak to us. The usual wax candles were burning all around; and a lovely wreath of chrysanthemums encircled her from head to foot. Her hands clasped a small crucifix, whilst a larger church one was placed above her head.

I asked for pencil and paper, and began a drawing of the quiet profile, the wreath of brilliant flowers, and the crucifix surmounting them. Friends of the family kept coming in and out, crossing themselves, and talking softly together. As I stood there, it was all so dreamlike, that I found myself wondering which was the greater reality. Was it these moving tangible forms, with their whispered words and mechanical gestures; or that motionless one on which I was gazing—were they the Reality? Or was it not rather the invisible beings—the friends of Flavia, the Suor Brigita, the real Ottavia, who had indeed 'gone,' but who now ARE?

December 19*th*.

'Se io potessi entrarci!' Flavia had said so often to Ottavia during her illness, and now they have come to tell me that yesterday (just one month later) she did 'enter.'

Soon after Ottavia's death she returned to her mother, and went her round as usual collecting the 'soldi' for the convent. Then after a day or two of weakness, she too 'went.' She knew that she was going, for she asked herself for all the offices for the dying—and told a friend after they had been administered, that she had but one regret—that of leaving her poor old mother, alone and without means.

Flavia wished especially that I should be told; and they sent me to-day a tiny '*gingillio*' containing the earth of some saint which she had always had by her bed.

I have been wondering if she were not the 'extraordinarily good woman' of Ottavia's dream—the one who wanted to go first, but was told to wait. I do not see why the girl should have dwelt so much on that woman, and on her goodness, unless she had been some one she knew; whilst certainly amongst her friends there was no one but Flavia to whom Heaven was so real, that the passage thereto was longed for instead of dreaded. Yes, it must have been Flavia; and now Ottavia's dream is finished, its predictions all fulfilled.

It leaves, however, a curious feeling of the nearness of the Beyond, and the reality of the unseen: a sort of illustration of Madame Guyon's 'deux seules vérités, le Tout et le Rien; le rien de la créature, le tout de Dieu.'

E. V.

NOTE.—The authoress wishes it to be stated that this is a perfectly true story, and the events all happened as narrated in the Winter of last year. Flavia's mother is still living—in great poverty.

DEBATABLE GROUND.

Is it desirable to emphasise, or to ignore, the barrier between different classes in philanthropic work?

'Philanthropic' work is not only, from a feminine point of view, almost the only common ground on which different classes meet, or would consent to meet; but it surely has for its main object, at least for its best result, a closer union and better understanding between them. The question, therefore, Chelsea China thinks, has a practical though not a 'logical answer,' and is, in fact, one of the chief practical questions of the day.

Chelsea China has only one remark to makes trictly of a practical

nature. The barriers that separate different classes can only be over passed by two principles. First, the desire on the upper side to lower them, and next, *the cordial recognition of them by all parties*—whether personally affected by them or not. The person, whether worker or worked upon, whatever her standing, who cannot see the delicate social distinctions above her own head, will run that head against brick walls in ways too obvious to specify. It is well to remember in these days, when ladies of every rank, from princesses downwards, are united in philanthropic work, that people belonging to the 'classes,' as well as to the 'masses,' have to consider their ways, often for the first time, in personal intercourse, with those who are obviously their social superiors.

But taking the matter from the superior's point of view, different classes can never work, or be worked upon, together, unless the distinctions between them are recognised by the person who wishes to bring them together. The professional or county lady who thinks it ridiculous in one of her tradesmen's wives to feel herself on a different level from the wife of another, who cannot see that the artisan's or small shopkeeper's daughter has had quite a different bringing up from the bricklayer's, and will probably have quite another set of friends, and who will not recognise the right of people of every grade to get the best society open to them, will never be able to unite different classes in philanthropic work. But if she recognises all these claims in her own mind, she may gradually, working downwards by the example of one to another, induce people to think them of minor importance, and to be willing to waive them and ignore them, for the sake of the great principle which should bind them all together.

It is a very common remark, that those who are certain of their position can do anything. Every one is certain of it, in some relations, and most are uncertain in some others. It is where people are not quite certain, that the courtesy and cordiality of the slightly superior tends to union, because it is felt to have a real result.

Pellegrina.—The principle of division here applied to the term Work, gives Philanthropic and non-Philanthropic work. Philanthropic denotes the motive of work, not its nature. But the relations of any work to any class depend on the nature of the work, not on the motive which prompts the worker. Therefore, the question as put has no answer. The nature and circumstances of the work must first be supplied, explicitly or implicitly, in answers which may appear contradictory, even when given by persons who agree, because they are really answering different questions put virtually by themselves. Barriers between different classes, as between the respectable and the criminal class, between masters and servants, princes and subjects, etc., are likely, if real, to hurt those who run up against them, however philanthropic. But those engaged in philanthropic work are not, therefore, bound to 'emphasise' these barriers.

We may imagine cases, as a railway accident, when the philanthropic helper will ignore all barriers between classes. Or, on the other hand, should any one for philanthropic reasons become a special constable, it might be his duty to emphasise a barrier between different classes by guarding it. But in neither case nor in any other is it desirable to emphasise or to ignore such barriers because the work is philanthropic.

DEAR CHELSEA CHINA,

I am inclined to think that places and people differ so much now-a-days that it is hard to give a definite answer. You may find a large town, or a suburban district, where every one considers themselves socially about as good as every one else, and where each class has its own circle of acquaintances and has no burning desire to enlarge them in any direction. In such places I think the more the different classes are mixed together in philanthropic work the better. In smaller places, where there are very strongly-marked barriers of caste, I think difficulties arise, unless the person at the head of the philanthropic work is a person of age and experience, because well-meaning persons, with a touch of worldliness and pretension, sometimes mix their motives and make their philanthropy a ladder for social advancement, which is neither good for themselves nor for the work. Huffiness and readiness to take offence on one side, and superciliousness on the other, are also not easily manageable by a young, inexperienced, or not thorough-bred President; and therefore I should be disposed, when the place is small, the barriers strongly marked, and the leader young, to advise her to mix her classes with great descrimination.

X.Y.Z.

X.—'Ladies' resent mistakes made by the 'middle classes,' in the ways of addressing them either personally or by letter. They think social distinctions are *ignored*, and frequently *emphasise* them in return; but if these very ladies have lived retired lives, *they* might feel perplexed, if suddenly called upon to discuss the character of a G.F.S. girl with an unknown duchess, whether and when to say 'Your Grace'; and if they wanted to call the attention of a Bishop or a Lord Chancellor, might be quite uncertain what to call him. Want of social experience is not the same thing as want of proper feeling, and should be allowed for when different classes mix, perhaps for the first time.

Arnaud.—It is not quite clear to me if the word 'barrier' is not used by mistake for 'difference.' Naturally it would not be well to emphasise a *barrier* in any work.

Perhaps it is assumed that class difference *is* a barrier. I do not think so, or rather I do not think that ignoring the difference would help philanthropic work.

Emphasising it would of course be fatal, but ignoring would have

merely the effect of any false action, it would do corresponding harm, if, indeed, the attempt were not utterly futile.

'Sisters,' who are supposed to go among the poor as one of themselves, do not by any means lose their caste practically, for to their class is accorded a respect and safety which is exceptional.

Whoever gives what another takes, or has knowledge which another lacks, represents the wealthy, the cultured, the responsible class, and rightly. Why ignore it?

There is no denying the fact, that God has not made all men equal (else there would be no need of philanthropic work), and it is a real wrong to the poor, to act in any way that may tend to the 'I'm-as-good-as-you' tone of mind. 'Lady' means 'loaf-giver,' and so long as a woman gives bread (or its equivalent for mind or body), a 'lady' she will be in the mind of the poor, and no wearing of old clothes or other innocent little frauds will make any difference; the poor are very clear-sighted, and practical in some things, and naturally *know* the 'difference' (or barrier) between those who work, be it ever so hard, because they wish to, and those who do so only because they must. They know, too, that money *does* make a difference, that knowledge *is* power, and to try to ignore these things is waste of time.

There is no more reason that such a difference should come in the way of real trust and sympathy, than that a child should distrust its mother because it knows her to be older and wiser than itself.

Of course, 'emphasising' and 'ignoring' would differ in individual cases; but for this work, as for any other in life, I suppose *B Natural* is the one safe key, and a person who is really in earnest, and not merely anxious for influence, or thinking of self-will generally, get, to people's *hearts*, and *there* 'class' difference counts for little, for *then* it is too late to emphasise *or* ignore.

Spermologos.—Let me just touch on one difficulty, *not* of manners. It is by no means meant to suggest an obstruction, but a caution, i.e. that a gentlewoman has a code of minor morals connected with 'honour' that are instinctive to her birth and breeding. They sometimes come by character to what we call 'nature's true lady,' and are acquired as parts of religious principle by grace by others; but they are not so certain as to be absolutely reckoned upon, where tact is required, or there is a need of trust (not in material things). It is better to have experience of each person in these instances before making a venture, or there may be disappointment, undue and exaggerated. Amalgamation and common interest is the way to inspire this higher tone; but without necessity, it is better not to go too far with the unproven in any degree, and each presents a different set of stumbling-blocks.

I. M. D., *Edith*, *Polly*, *Madame la Baronne*, *Gretchen*, *L. J. B.*, *Wild Iris*, are in favour of ignoring class distinctions; *Titania*, *Dorothea*, think they may be recognised as facts without either emphasising or

ignoring them. *Paulina* seems on the whole to be of the same opinion; but the fact that a countess is an attractive lady patroness, is not an argument either way.

The papers are interesting; but the practical difficulties of the matter are very faintly indicated in them, and they deal much in incontrovertible generalities.

X.'s remarks do not constitute an argument, but give an instance of the kind of misapprehension that makes the subject so difficult to deal with practically.

Chelsea China would be much obliged if *Pellegrina* would give her an address, as she would like to answer her letter, with much of which she concurs.

A Learner's paper received too late.

QUESTION FOR JULY.

Is verbal truthfulness always the highest duty?

Answers to be sent to Chelsea China, care of the Publisher, before August 1st.

There is no subscription to Debatable Ground.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

HISTORY OF ROME.

Questions for July.

25. Write a character of Scipio, with biographical illustrations.

26. Of what nature was the authority of the Roman Senate, and how were the Senators appointed? Enumerate the functionaries of the Republic.

27. What is known about (1) the Atellane Fables, (2) the Fescennine verses, (3) Saturnian poetry?

28. Relate briefly the events which led to the first Macedonian War.

The February and March class lists are unavoidably postponed until August.

The Monthly Packet.

AUGUST, 1887.

BEECHCROFT AT ROCKSTONE.

BY THE EDITOR.

CHAPTER VIII.

GILLIAN'S PUPIL.

GILLIAN was not yet seventeen, and had lived a home life totally removed from gossip; so that she had no notion that she was doing a more awkward or remarkable thing than if she had been teaching a drummer-boy. She even deliberated whether she should mention her undertaking to her mother, or produce the grand achievement of Alexis White, prepared for a college, on the return from India; but a sense that she had promised to tell everything, and that, while she did so, she could defy any other interference, led her to write the design in a letter to Ceylon, and then she felt ready to defy any censure or obstructions from other quarters.

Mystery has a certain charm. Infinite knowledge of human nature was shown in the text—'Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant'; and it would be hard to define how much Gillian's satisfaction was owing to the sense of benevolence, or to the pleasure of eluding Aunt Jane, when, after going through her chapter of *Katharine Ashton*, in a somewhat perfunctory manner, she hastened away to Miss White's office. This, being connected with the show-room, could be entered without passing through the gate with the inscription—'No admittance except on business.' Indeed, the office had a private door, which, at Gillian's signal, was always opened to her. There, on the drawing-desk, lay a Greek exercise and a translation, with queries upon the difficulties for Gillian to correct, or answer in writing. Kalliope had managed to make that little room a pleasant place, bare as it was, by pinning a few of her designs on the walls, and always keeping a terra-cotta vase of flowers or coloured leaves upon the table. The lower part of the window she had blocked with transparencies, delicately cut and tinted in cardboard, done, as she

told Gillian, by her little brother Theodore, who learnt to draw at the National School, and had the same turn for art as herself. Altogether, the perfect neatness and simplicity of the little room gave it an air of refinement, which rendered it by no means an unfit setting for the grave beauty of Kalliope's countenance and figure.

The enjoyment of the meeting was great on both sides, partly from the savour of old times, and partly because there was really much that was uncommon and remarkable about Kalliope herself. Her father's promotion had come exactly when she and her next brother were at the time of life when the changes it brought would tell most on their minds and manners. They had both been sent to schools where they had associated with young people of gentle breeding, which perhaps their partly-foreign extraction, and southern birth and childhood, made it easier for them to assimilate. Their beauty and brightness had led to a good deal of kindly notice from the officers and ladies of the regiment, and they had thus acquired the habits and ways of the class to which they had been raised. Their father, likewise, had been a man of a chivalrous nature, whose youthful mistakes had been the outcome of high spirit and romance, and who, under discipline, danger, suffering, and responsibility, had become earnestly religious. There had besides been his Colonel's influence on him, and on his children that of Lady Merrifield and Alethea.

It had then been a piteous change and darkening of life when, after the crushing grief of his death, the young people found themselves in such an entirely different stratum of society. They were ready to work, but they could not help feeling the mortification of being relegated below the mysterious line of gentry, as they found themselves at Rockquay, and viewed as on a level with the clerks and shop-girls of the place. Still more, as time went on, did they miss the companionship and intercourse to which they had been used. Mr. Flight, the only person in a higher rank who took notice of them, and perceived that there was more in them than was usual, was after all only a patron—not a friend; and perhaps was not essentially enough of a gentleman to be free from all airs of condescension even with Alexis, while he might be wise in not making too much of an approach to so beautiful a girl as Kalliope. Besides, after a fit of eagerness, and something very like promises, he had apparently let Alexis drop, only using him for his musical services, and not doing anything to promote the studies for which the young man thirsted, nor proposing anything for the younger boys, who would soon outgrow the National School.

Alexis had made a few semi-friends among the musical youth of the place; but there was no one to sympathise with him in his studious tastes, and there was much in his appearance and manners to cause the accusation of being 'stuck-up'—music being really the only point of contact with most of his fellows of the lower professional class.

Kalliope had less time, but she had, on principle, cultivated kindly terms with the young women employed under her. Her severe style of beauty removed her from any jealousy of her as a rival; and she was admired—almost worshipped—by them as the glory of the workshop. They felt her superiority, and owned her ability; but nobody there was capable of being a companion to her. Thus the sister and brother had almost wholly depended upon one another; and it was like a breath from what now seemed the golden age of their lives, when Gillian Merrifield walked into the office, treating Kalliope with all the freedom of an equal, and the affection of an old friend. There was not very much time to spare after Gillian had looked at the exercises, noted and corrected the errors, and explained the difficulties or mistakes in the translation from Testament and Delectus, feeling all the time how much more mastery of the subject her pupil had than Mr. Pollock's at home had ever attained to.

However, Kalliope always walked home with her as far as the opening of Church Cliff Road, and they talked of the cleverness and goodness of the brothers, except Richard at Leeds, who never seemed to be mentioned; how Theodore kept the head of the school, and had hopes of the drawing prize, and how little Petros devoured tales of battles, and would hear of nothing but being a soldier. Now and then, too, there was a castle in the air of a home for little Maura at Alexis's future curacy. Kalliope seemed to look to working for life for poor mother, while Theodore should cultivate his art. Oftener the two recalled old adventures and scenes of their regimental days, and discussed the weddings of the two Indian sisters.

Once, however, Kalliope was obliged to suggest with a blushing apology, that she feared Gillian must go home alone, she was not ready.

'Can't I help you? What have you to do?'

Kalliope attempted some excuse of putting away designs, but presently peeped from the window, and Gillian, with excited curiosity, imitated her, and beheld, lingering about, a young man in the pink of fashion, with a tea-rose in his button-hole, and a cane in his hand.

'Oh Kally,' she cried, 'does he often hang about like this waiting for you?'

'Not often, happily. There! old Mr. Stebbing has come out, and they are walking away together. We can go now.'

'So he besets you, and you have to keep out of his way,' exclaimed Gillian, much excited. 'Is that the reason you come to the garden all alone on Sunday?'

'Yes, though I little guessed what awaited me there,' returned Kalliope; 'but we had better make haste, for it is late for you to be returning.'

It was disappointing that Kalliope would not discuss such an interesting affair, but Gillian was sensible of the danger of being so

late as to cause questions, and she allowed herself to be hurried on too fast for conversation, and passing the two Stebbings, who, no doubt, took her for a 'hand.'

'Does this often happen?' asked Gillian.

'No; Alec walks home with me, and the boys often come and meet me. Oh, did I tell you that the master wants Theodore to be a pupil teacher? I wish I knew what was best for him.'

'Could not he be an artist?'

'I should like some one to tell me whether he really has talent worth cultivating, dear boy, or if he would be safer and better in an honourable occupation like a schoolmaster.'

'Do you call it honourable?'

'Oh, yes, to be sure. I put it next to a clergyman's or a doctor's life.'

'Not a soldier's?'

'That depends,' said Kalliope.

'On the service he is sent upon, you mean? But that is his sovereign's look out. He "only has to obey, to do, or die."'

'Yes, it is the putting away of self, and possible peril of life, that makes all those grandest,' said Kalliope, 'and I think the schoolmaster is next in opportunities of doing good.'

Gillian could not help thinking that none of all these could put away self more entirely than the girl beside her, toiling away her beauty and her youth in this dull round of toil, not able to exercise the instincts of her art to the utmost, and with no change from the monotonous round of mosaics, which were forced to be second rate, to the commonest household works, and the company of the Queen of the White Ants.

Gillian perceived enough of the nobleness of such a life to fill her with a certain enthusiasm, and make her feel a day blank and uninteresting if she could not make her way to the little office.

One evening, towards the end of the first fortnight, Alexis himself came in with a passage that he wanted to have explained. His sister looked uneasy all the time, and hurried to put on her hat, and stand demonstratively waiting, telling Gillian that they must go, the moment the lesson began to tend to discursive talk, and making a most decided sign of prohibition to her brother when he showed a disposition to accompany them.

'I think you are frightfully particular, Kally,' said Gillian, when they were on their way up the hill. 'Such an old friend, and you there, too.'

'It would never do here! It would be wrong,' answered Kalliope, with the authority of an older woman. 'He must not come to the office.'

'Oh! but how could I ever explain to him? One can't do everything in writing. I might as well give up the lessons as never speak to him about them.'

There was truth in this, and perhaps Alexis used some such arguments on his side, for at about every third visit of Gillian's, he dropped in with some important enquiry necessary to his progress, which was rapid enough to compel Gillian to devote some time to preparation, in order to keep ahead of him.

Kalliope kept diligent guard, and watched against lengthening the lessons into gossip, and they were always after hours when the hands had gone away. The fear of being detected kept Gillian ready to shorten the time.

'How late you are!' were the first words she heard one October evening on entering Beechcroft Cottage; but they were followed by 'Here's a pleasure for you!'

'It's from papa himself! Open it! Open it quick,' cried Valetta, dancing round her in full appreciation of the honour and delight.

Sir Jasper said that his daughter must put up with him for a correspondent, since two brides at once were as much as any mother could be supposed to undertake. Indeed, as mamma would not leave him, Phyllis was actually going to Calcutta, chaperoned by one of the matrons of the station, to make purchases for both outfits, since Alethea would not stir from under the maternal wing sooner than she could help.

At the end came, 'We are much shocked at poor White's death. He was an excellent officer, and a good and sensible man, though much hampered with his family. I am afraid his wife must be a very helpless being. He used to talk about the good promise of one of his sons, the second, I think. We will see whether anything can be done for the children when we come home. I say *we*, for I find I shall have to be invalided before I can be entirely patched up, so that mamma and I shall have a sort of postponed silver wedding tour, a new variety for the old folks "from home."'

'Oh, is papa coming home?' cried Valetta.

'For good! Oh! I hope it will be for good,' added Gillian.

'Then we shall live at dear Silverfold all the days of our life,' added Fergus.

'And I shall get back to Rigdum.'

'And I shall make a telephone down to the stables,' were the cries of the children.

The transcendent news quite swallowed up everything else for some time; but at last Gillian recurred to her father's testimony as to the White family.

'Is the second son the musical one?' she was asked, and on her affirmative, Aunt Jane remarked, 'Well, though the Rev. Augustine Flight is not on a pinnacle of human wisdom, his choir practices, etc., will keep the lad well out of harm's way till your father can see about him.'

This would have been an opportunity of explaining the youth's aims and hopes, and her own share in forwarding them; but it had

become difficult to avow the extent of her intercourse with the brother and sister, so entirely without the knowledge of her aunts. Even Miss Mohun, acute as she was, had no suspicions, and only thought with much satisfaction that her niece was growing more attentive to poor Lilian Giles, even to the point of lingering.

'I really think,' she said, in consultation with Miss Adeline, 'that we might gratify that damsel by having the White girls to drink tea.'

'Well, we can add them to your winter party of young ladies in business.'

'Hardly. These stand on different ground, and I don't want to hurt their feelings or Gillian's by mixing them up with the shopocracy.'

'Have you seen the Queen of the White Ants?'

'Not yet; but I mean to reconnoitre, and if I see no cause to the contrary, I shall invite them for next Tuesday.'

'The mother? You might as well ask her namesake.'

'Probably; but I shall be better able to judge when I have seen her.'

So Miss Mohun trotted off, made her visit, and thus reported, 'Poor woman! she certainly is not lovely now, whatever she may have been; but I should think there was no harm in her, and she is effusive in her gratitude to all the Merrifield family. It is plain that the absent eldest son is the favourite, far more so than the two useful children at the marble works; and Mr. White is spoken of as a sort of tyrant, whereas I should think they owed a good deal to his kindness in giving them employment.'

'I always thought he was an old hunks.'

'The town thinks so because he does not come and spend freely here; but I have my doubts whether they are right. He is always ready to do his part in subscriptions; and the employing these young people as he does is true kindness.'

'Unappreciated.'

'Yes, by the mother who would expect to be kept like a lady in idleness, but perhaps not so by her daughter. From all I can pick up, I think she must be a very worthy person, so I have asked her and the little school girl for Tuesday evening, and I hope it will not be a great nuisance to you, Ada.'

'Oh, no,' said Miss Adeline, good humouredly, 'it will please Gillian, and I shall be interested in seeing the species, or rather the variety.'

'*Var Musa Græca Hibernica Militaris*,' laughed Aunt Jane. 'By the bye, I further found out what made the Captain enlist.'

'Trust you for doing that!' laughed her sister.

'Really it was not on purpose, but old Zack Skilly was indulging me with some of his ancient smuggling experiences, in what he evidently views as the heroic age of Rockquay. "Men was men, then," he says. "Now they be good for nought, but to row out the

gentlefolks when the water is as smooth as glass." You should hear the contempt in his voice.' Well, a promising young hero of his was Dick White, what used to work for his uncle, but liked a bit of a lark, and at last hit one of the coastguard men in a fight, and ran away, and folks said he had gone for a soldier. Skilly had heard he was dead, and his wife had come to live in these parts, but there was no knowing what was true and what wasn't. Folks would talk! Dick was a likely chap, with more life about him than his cousin Jem, as was a great man now, and owned all the marble works, and a goodish bit of the town. There was a talk as how the two lads had both been a courting of the same ma-id, that was Betsy Polwhele, and had fallen out about her, but how that might be, he could not tell. Anyhow, she was not wed to one nor t'other of them, but went into a waste and died.'

'I wonder if it was for Dick's sake.'

'So Jem was not constant either.'

'Except to his second love. That was a piteous little story too.'

'You mean his young wife's health failing as soon as he brought her to that house which he was building for her, and then his taking her to Italy, and never enduring to come back here again after she and her child died. But he made a good thing of it with his quarries in the mountains.'

'You sordid person, do you think that was all he cared for!'

'Well, I always thought of him as a great, stout, monied man, quite incapable of romance and sensitiveness.'

'If so, don't you think he would have let that house instead of keeping it up in empty state? There is a good deal of character in those Whites.'

'The Captain is certainly the most marked man, except Jasper, in that group of officers in Gillian's photograph-book.'

'Partly from the fact that a herd of young officers always look so exactly alike—at least in the eyes of elderly spinsters.'

'Jane!'

'Let us hope so, now that it is all over. This same Dick must have had something remarkable about him, to judge by the impression he seems to have left on all who came in his way, and I shall like to see his children.'

'You always do like queer people.'

'It is plain that we ought to take notice of them,' said Miss Mohun, 'and it is not wholesome for Gillian to think us backward in kindness to friends about whom she plainly has a little romance.'

She refrained from uttering a suspicion inspired by her visit that there had been more 'kindnesses' on her niece's part than she could quite account for. Yet she believed that she knew how all the girl's days were spent; was certain that the Sunday wanderings never went beyond the garden, and, moreover, she implicitly trusted Lily's daughter. Gillian did not manifest as much delight and

gratitude at the invitation as her aunts expected. In point of fact, she resented Aunt Jane's making a visit of investigation without telling her, and she was uneasy lest there should have been or yet should be a disclosure that should make her proceedings appear clandestine. 'And they are *not!*' said she to herself with vehemence. 'Do I not write them all to my own mother? And did not Miss Vincent allow that one is not bound to treat aunts like parents?'

Even the discovery of Captain White's antecedents was almost an offence, for if her aunt would not let her enquire, why should she do so herself, save to preserve the choice *morçeau* for her own superior intelligence? Thus all the reply that Gillian deigned was 'Of course I knew that Captain White could never have done anything to be ashamed of.'

The weather was too wet for any previous meetings, and it was on a wild stormy evening that the two sisters appeared at seven o'clock at Beechcroft Cottage. While hats and waterproofs were being taken off upstairs, Gillian found opportunity to give a warning against mentioning the Greek lessons. It was received with consternation.

'Oh! Miss Merrifield, do not your aunts know?'

'No. Why should they? Mamma does.'

'Not yet. And she is so far off! I wish Miss Mohun knew! I made sure that she did,' said Kalliope, much distressed.

'But why? It would only make a fuss.'

'I should be much happier about it.'

'And perhaps have it all upset.'

'That is the point. I felt that it must be all right as long as Miss Mohun sanctioned it; but I could not bear that we should be the means of bringing you into a scrape, by doing what she might disapprove while you are under her care.'

'Don't you think you can trust me to know my own relations,' said Gillian, somewhat haughtily.

'Indeed, I did not mean that we are not infinitely obliged to you,' said Kalliope. 'It has made Alexis another creature to have some hope, and feel himself making progress.'

'Then why do you want to have a fuss, and a bother, and a chatter? If my father and mother don't approve, they can telegraph.'

With which argument she appeased, or rather silenced Kalliope, who could not but feel the task of objecting alike ungracious and ungrateful towards the instructor, and absolutely cruel and unkind towards her brother, and who spoke only from a sense of the treachery of allowing a younger girl to transgress in ignorance. Still she was conscious of not understanding on what terms the niece and aunts might be, and the St. Kenelm's estimate of the Beechcroft ladies was naturally somewhat different from that of the St. Andrew's congregation. Miss Mohun was popularly regarded in those quarters as an intolerable busybody, and Miss Adeline as a hypochondriacal fine lady, so that Gillian might perhaps reasonably object to put herself into

absolute subjection; so though Kalliope might have a presentiment of breakers ahead, she could say no more, and Gillian, feeling that she had been cross, changed the subject by admiring the pretty short curly hair that was being tied back at the glass.

'I wish it would grow long,' said Kalliope. 'But it always was rather short and troublesome, and ever since it was cut short in the fever, I have been obliged to keep it like this.'

'But it suits you,' said Gillian. 'And it is exactly the thing now.'

'That is the worst of it. It looks as if I wore it so on purpose. However, all our hands know that I cannot help it, and so does Lady Flight.'

The girl looked exceedingly well, though little Alice, the maid, would not have gone out to tea in such an ancient black dress, with no relief save a rim of white at neck and hands, and a tiny silver Maltese cross at the throat. Maura had a comparatively new grey dress, picked out with black. She was a pretty creature, the Irish beauty predominating over the Greek, in her great long-lashed brown eyes, which looked radiant with shy happiness. Miss Adeline was perfectly taken by surprise at the entrance of two such uncommon forms and faces, and the quiet dignity of the elder made her for a moment suppose that her sister must have invited some additional guest of undoubted station.

Valetta, who had grown fond of Maura in their school life, and who dearly loved patronising, pounced upon her guest to show her all manner of treasures and curiosities, at which she looked in great delight; and Fergus was so well satisfied with her comprehension of the principles of the letter balance, that he would have taken her upstairs to be introduced to all his mechanical inventions, if the total darkness and cold of his den had not been prohibitory.

Kalliope looked to perfection, but was more silent than her sister, though, as Miss Mohun's keen eye noted, it was not the shyness of a conscious inferior in an unaccustomed world, but rather that of a grave, reserved nature, not chattering for the sake of mere talk.

Gillian's photograph-book was well looked over, with all the brothers and sisters at different stages, and the group of officers. Miss Mohun noted the talk that passed over these, as they were identified one by one, sometimes with little reminiscences, childishly full on Gillian's part, betraying on Kalliope's side friendly acquaintance, but all in as entirely lady-like terms as would have befitted Phyllis or Alethea. She could well believe in the words with which Miss White rather hastened the turning of the page, 'Those were happy days—I dare not dwell on them too much!'

'Oh! I like to do so,' cried Gillian. 'I don't want the little ones ever to forget them.'

'Yes—you! But with you it would not be repining.'

This was for Gillian's ear alone, as at that moment both the aunts

were, at the children's solicitation, engaged on the exhibition of a wonderful musical-box—Aunt Adeline's share of her mother's wedding presents—containing a bird that hovered and sung, the mechanical contrivance of which was the chief merit in Fergus's eyes, and which had fascinated generations of young people for the last sixty years. Aunt Jane, however, could hear through anything—even through the winding up of what the family called 'Aunt Ada's Jackdaw,' and she drew her conclusions, with increasing respect and pity for the young girl, over whose life such a change had come.

But it was not this, but what she called common humanity, which prompted her, on hearing a heavy gust of rain against the windows, to go into the lower regions in quest of a messenger boy to order a brougham to take the guests home at the end of the evening.

The meal went off pleasantly on the whole, though there loomed a storm as to the ritual of St. Kenelm's; but this chiefly was owing to the younger division of the company, when Valetta broke into an unnecessary enquiry why they did not have as many lights on the altar at St. Andrew's as at St. Kenelm's, and Fergus put her down with unceremoniously declaring that Stebbing said Flight was a donkey.

Gillian came down with what she meant for a crushing rebuke, and the indignant colour rose in the cheeks of the guests; but Fergus persisted, 'But he makes a guy of himself and a mountebank.'

Aunt Jane thought it time to interfere. 'Fergus,' she said, 'you had better not repeat improper sayings, especially about a clergyman.'

Fergus wriggled.

'And,' added Aunt Ada, with equal severity, 'you know Mr. Flight is a very kind friend to little Maura and her sister.'

'Indeed he is,' said Kalliope, earnestly; and Maura, feeling herself addressed, added, 'Nobody but he ever called on poor mamma, till Miss Mohun did; no, not Lady Flight.'

'We are very grateful for his kindness,' put in Kalliope, in a repressive tone.

'But,' said Gillian, 'I thought you said he had seemed to care less of late.'

'I do not know,' said Miss White, blushing; 'music seems to be his chief interest, and there has not been anything fresh to get up since the concert.'

'I suppose there will be for the winter,' said Miss Mohun, and therewith the conversation was safely conducted away to musical subjects, in which some of the sisters' pride and affection for their brothers peeped out; but Gillian was conscious all the time that Kalliope was speaking with some constraint when she mentioned Alexis, and that she was glad rather to dwell on little Theodore, who had good hopes of the drawing prize, and she seriously consulted Miss Mohun on the pupil-teachership for him, as after he had passed the

seventh standard he could not otherwise go on with his education, though she did not think he had much time for teaching.'

'Would not Mr. White help him further?' asked Miss Mohun.

'I do not know. I had much rather not ask,' said Kalliope. 'We are too many to throw ourselves on a person who is no near relation, and he has not seemed greatly disposed to help.'

'Your elder brother?'

'Oh! poor Richard, he is not earning anything yet. I can't ask him. If I only knew of some school I could be sure was safe and good and not too costly, Alexis and I would try to manage for him after the examination in the spring.'

The Woodward schools were a new light to her, and she was eagerly interested in Miss Mohun's explanations and in the scale of terms.

Meantime Miss Adeline got on excellently with the younger ones, and when the others were free, proposed for their benefit a spelling game. All sat round the table, made words, and abstracted one another's with increasing animation, scarcely heeding the roaring of the wind outside, till there was a ring at the bell.

'My brother is come for us,' said Kalliope.

'Oh, but it is not fit for you to walk home,' said Miss Mohun. 'The brougham is coming by-and-by; ask Mr. White to come in,' she added, as the maid appeared with the message that he was come for his sisters.

There was a confusion of acknowledgments and disclaimers, and word was brought back that Mr. White was too wet to come in. Miss Mohun, who was not playing but prompting Fergus, jumped up and went out to investigate, when she found a form in an ancient military cloak, trying to keep himself from dripping where wet could do mischief. She had to explain her regret at his having had such a walk in vain; but she had taken alarm on finding that rain was setting in for the night, and had sent word by the muffin-boy that the brougham would be wanted, contriving to convey that it was not to be paid for.

Nothing remained to be said except thanks, and Alexis emerged from the cloak which looked as if it had gone through all his father's campaigns, took off his gaiters, did his best for his boots, and though not in evening costume, looked very gentleman-like and remarkably handsome in the drawing-room, with no token of awkward embarrassment save a becoming blush.

Gillian began to tremble inwardly again, but the game had just ended in her favour, owing to Fergus having lost all his advantages in Aunt Jane's absence, besides signalising himself by capturing Maura's 'bury,' under the impression that an additional R would combine that and *straw* into a fruit.

So the coast being cleared, Miss Adeline greatly relieved her niece's mind by begging, as a personal favour, to hear the song whose

'Good-morning,' shouted the Squire out of his bedroom window.

'Good-morning,' cried his daughter. 'Oh, papa, isn't it lovely? Make haste and come out, quick.'

The Squire's window closed with a bang, and the song went on again.

'Deal on, deal on, my merry men all,
Deal on the ale and wine,
For whatever you deal at her burial to-day
Shall be dealt to-morrow at mine.'

Raymond got up at last, and made his way down into the garden, to find Dagmar gathering up the dahlias which Dick had scattered. He would have come to her assistance, but she laughed him to scorn, showing her slender sunburnt fingers dyed all purple by the dahlias' decaying petals.

So, as he did not love to soil his own far whiter hands, Raymond stood still upon the side-walk, basking lazily in the warm sunshine and watching Day as she flitted about, sometimes in sunlight, sometimes in shade. She looked so bright and merry, so trim and dainty with her clean cotton dress and glossy waves of hair, that it was hard to connect her with those doleful verses of old-world tragedy which she had just been singing with such passion and pathos.

The Squire appeared on the steps of the garden-door, and she flew at him, hugged him, and darted indoors, vowing that she was starving. The Squire laughed, greeted his nephew, and accompanied him indoors more leisurely, stopping on the way to count the Jargonelle pears that grew against the sunny south wall.

The dining-room was all flowers and sunshine, and Mrs. Tyndal was seated behind the coffee-pot, with Agnes on one side of her, and on the other, Dagmar already at breakfast, like the nursery-queen, 'eating bread and honey.'

Mrs. Tyndal in her soft deep voice enquired very carefully after Raymond's comforts, looked distressed when he owned that he had a bad habit of not sleeping, and while he talked with her husband and Agnes, was evidently considering what could be done for him.

She made a mental memorandum of something which she could procure and persuade him to try, and then came back to present interest.

'Day, dearest,' she said, 'I wish you would go and find Dick. He will certainly be late with his lessons; and he really ought not to keep Mr. Layton waiting.'

'Does not Dick go to school now?' enquired Raymond.

'Not yet. We thought he was hardly strong enough to be sent away to a big school just yet. So Mr. Layton has kindly undertaken to give him two hours a day, and he has lessons to prepare besides.'

'The boy's being spoilt,—ruined!' said the Squire. 'He ought to go to school and rough it—do him good.'

'I know who was most against his going when the matter was

considered,' said Agnes, in her pleasant mocking tones. 'Who was it said that surely the house was big enough, and that it was a shame to send a poor little chap like that to school, to be bullied by all the big fellows?'

'Well! well!' said the Squire, 'we should all miss the impudent little beggar, no doubt. And the women must have something to fret and fuss over. But he must mind his lessons better, or he'll have to go.'

At this moment the delinquent entered, with his fair hair in much disorder, and his blue jacket white with dust. After him came Day, the letter-bag in one hand, and a bundle of letters in the other.

'Here's the bag,' she cried, 'and here are the letters that should have come yesterday. And one of them's a foreigner. But open the bag first, father darling, and see if there's one for me this morning.'

There was not, and she sat down with a pout, keeping an interested look-out upon her father's correspondence, but returning to her bread and honey with undiminished appetite.

Mr. Tyndal took up first the letter which his daughter had called a foreigner. He read it through, then laid it down on the table, and looked at his wife.

'Well!' he said, with long-drawn emphasis; and everybody, as he had hoped and expected, looked up and said: 'What is it?'

'A piece of news—most astonishing news,' he said. 'Guess what it is, all of you.'

'I think I know,' said Mrs. Tyndal, reflectively. 'Mr. Poynter has lost his seat in Parliament. You said he was to be petitioned against, for bribery.'

'Also her Majesty Queen Anne is dead,' murmured Dagmar. 'Mother dearest, *that* wouldn't be very great news, as far as we are concerned.'

'Good or bad?' asked Raymond.

'That's as they may turn out. At present they seem to me to be good news enough, interesting, at all events.'

'I know,' said Dagmar again. 'That letter was from Valparaiso, and you have only one correspondent in that part of the world. You have heard from the Myth—and he is coming home!'

'Right, little girl, for once,' said her father, taking up the letter again. 'It is from Maurice, and he is coming home directly.' I thought that last letter of mine about the dilapidations at the Court would fetch him.'

'I am glad,' said Day, nodding. 'I am curious to see this Myth in the flesh. Not that I shall believe in his coming till he is actually here.'

'Maurice?' said Raymond, 'Maurice Claughton, do you mean?'

'Yes! my ward that was. I have never seen him since he was ten years old, and none of the folks about here for five years before that. He has been very tiresome in refusing to come home, and

putting off time after time; but I think now he has made up his mind to it once for all.'

'How old is he?'

'About five-and-twenty—no! six! He has of course been his own master for some years now; but by his request I have still taken an interest in his affairs, and kept an eye upon his bailiff, and the people who had charge of the Court. But really now the place wants a thorough doing up, and I wrote and told him that I would not undertake the responsibility. He must come and see to things himself now.'

'But what has made him so unwilling to come to England?'

'Who can say? There was his mother first; and then when she was gone he was to stay to finish his education. Then it was settled he was to see a little more of the world first, and come home for his coming of age. And then his friend stood in the way—poor fellow. What was his name? Oh, yes!—Caryl. Caryl didn't choose to come to England, for some reason or other, and Maurice did not care to come without him. I let him have his fling for another year or two, and then pressed his coming home very strongly. They were in Egypt then, but he had just agreed to come over, at any rate for a time, when poor Caryl took a fever and died. And Maurice wrote me a heart-broken sort of letter, telling me to let everything slide, and went off to South America, and did not even write again for nearly a year. So there was no more talk of his coming home, till now.'

'Do you think he will stay here?' asked Mrs. Tyndal, thinking of the increased establishment which would be required at the Court, and of some village protégées of hers who might hope to be made under-gardeners or stable-boys.

'I don't know. I fancy so, from what he says here. But he must be a queer fish; there is no saying what notion he may take into his head next.'

'I can't fancy what should make any one stay away so long from such a place as the Court,' said Agnes, with half a sigh.

'Is it so beautiful then?' asked Raymond. 'I don't think I have ever seen it since I was old enough to know that Nature had any beauties—or Art either.'

'You shall see it to-day, if you like,' said the Squire. 'I must go up there after lunch, to tell the folks to make some preparations for their master. You had better all of you come with me, and see what adornments and alterations you think the place requires. Then we shall have at least half a dozen different notions to perplex Maurice with when he returns.'

'When will he be here?' asked Dagmar.

'*I* don't know! He says "with all possible speed," and seems to think that I know, to an hour, how long a journey from Valparaiso will take.'

'I am looking forward very much to seeing him; he is new,' said she, compressing her lips and looking darkly out of the window. 'But I think I should have liked his friend best, the one who died. It was very odd, wasn't he called Maurice, too? He must have been awfully nice, to make any one so very fond of him.'

'My dear,' said Agnes Morrison, 'it takes more "niceness," as you call it, to love than to be loved.'

'I know!' answered Dagmar. 'But he is dead, you see; so the gods loved him too! That's why I think he must have been interesting. I wonder if this Maurice will talk about him at all, or if we shall ever see a new picture among those old portraits at the Court which will tell us what he was like?'

'Dick!' said Mrs. Tyndal, gently, 'really you must not wait for any more breakfast. There is the pony at the door.'

'Have you got all your books?' cried Day, waking up from her dream, and without any apology flying out into the hall to find the young gentleman's knapsack and rummage therein. She found all the lesson-books there but one, and in its place a sixpenny edition of *Percival Keene*, which she threw at his head with remarkable precision of aim. He dodged it, and she flew off to get him the missing book, while he put on his boots, helping him to arrange the strap of the knapsack, and following him out on the steps to watch him mount his pony with most motherly care and interest.

Raymond had sauntered out of the dining-room after her. 'What are you going to do this morning?' he asked, when Dick was out of sight.

'Well! first I must feed my animals, and then I shall do some German.'

'May I come with you, and assist in both occupations?'

'Of course, if you like,' she answered, with a frank look of wonder; 'but mother and Agnes will be in the morning-room, and you will find their morning occupations far more civilised than mine.'

'I had rather come with you,' said Raymond, quietly.

'Then wait for me here a moment while I fetch the things. I won't be long.'

It was not long, but more than a moment, before she came back, with a large holland apron with pockets, and a basket of corn.

'I am sorry to have made you wait so long,' she said, gravely; 'but there are so many things to see after. I have to give an eye to Dick's animals as well as my own, because sometimes he feeds them, and sometimes he does not.'

She led the way as she spoke into the back hall, a large stone-paved room, where all the out-door properties and appliances of the family had their abode—guns, fishing-rods, walking-sticks, croquet-mallets, tennis-rackets, and some mysterious objects, the use whereof might be known to Dick but to no one else in the world. Here in a broad

sunny window-seat was a large wicker cage containing a pair of doves. Dagmar took a piece of bread from her apron pocket and began to feed them, and Raymond leaned against the shutter and watched her.

He was well skilled in the art of doing nothing gracefully, and enjoyed it. Sometimes it came over him, with a little thrill that was almost like fear, that he was fast growing to enjoy nothing else.

Though he had never been very energetic in his profession, there had been a time when he had a good deal of energy to bestow upon any piece of business that interested him, or upon the pursuit of pleasure. *Now*, it seemed to him that there was very little worth the trouble of doing, and that to bask in the sunshine, and not even *think* more than could be avoided, might be the perfection of earthly well-being.

'I must be growing old,' he thought. 'But a man should not be so very old at five-and-thirty. Day shall make me young again; she has youth and energy enough for two.'

'It is very pleasant here in the sunshine,' he said, lazily. 'I love the sun. I think I should like to go to sleep and dream away the winter, and never wake till May was over and the summer begun again.'

'I should not. I think it would be dreadful to miss part of one's life. How could you tell what you might miss while you lay dreaming.'

'Not much, judging by what passes while one remains unavoidably awake.'

Dagmar threw the last crumb to the doves and opened the outer door of the stone hall and stepped out into the sunshine, singing under her breath—

'Thy steed is dead in his stall, Earl Harold,
Since thou hast been with me;
The rust hath eaten thy harness bright,
And the rats have eaten thy greyhound light
That was so fair and free.'

'No!' she said, as they crossed the wide courtyard, 'I should not care for an enchanted garden of perpetual summer. I would not for anything spare the winter out of the year.'

'Cold and wet and muddy roads!' said Raymond, provokingly. 'Fog and frost and rain, and long dark evenings! Nothing to do, and no daylight to do it in; not a soul to see, and no spirit to go and see them.'

'White snow and red sunshine,' she answered, smiling defiantly into his face. 'Short bright days and long starlight nights. Fine days when it is a pleasure to be out, and stormy ones when it is a pleasure only to be indoors, and hear the fire crackle and think how cold and dreary it is outside. Not to speak of berried holly and Christmas-time, and all the dear poor folks chuckling over their Christmas presents.'

'Christmas!' he said, almost bitterly, as they turned into the stable,

and Day brought out a lump of sugar from her pocket and stood stroking her horse's nose while he ate it. 'Christmas! the very fact of that festive season coming in the winter would be enough to make a man hate it.'

'Don't you like Christmas?' she asked, with wide eyes of childish wonder.

'Oh, yes! very much,' he answered, with a short laugh. 'It is so pleasant to sit by a fire alone in your chambers, and study your Christmas bills! There is something so exhilarating in the feeling that you are expected to be in high spirits and to be perfectly amiable and charitable towards every one—even the man in the rooms above, who has got a bachelors' party, who are singing in chorus a song that sounds as if it were "composed and sung by a company of lunatics at full moon." It is so cheering to think of all the people who *are*, and all the people who are *not*, enjoying themselves. I declare I don't know which reflection is the most agreeable! And perhaps, even, at the bottom of your heap of bills you find a note from a friend, inviting you to join his family party (which means, since it is Christmas-time, to dine in a scramble along with the children), and wishing you a very Merry Christmas!'

'Should you like Christmas if you could choose your own way of spending it, and your own place to spend it in?' she asked, leading the way into the harness-room.

'Probably not! The human mind rebels against being expected to be happy.'

'*Your* mind does, you mean,' said Dagmar, looking at him compassionately and consideringly. 'And if you are so bad as that I don't know what is to be done for you.'

Raymond laughed. 'Nor I either! But what in the world have you got there?'

She was standing by a large wire cage in a dark corner, tapping lightly on the bars, while something within answered with a rustle and a flutter.

'This is my owl—Dick's and mine—Old Plato! He is not lively in the daytime—nearly as misanthropical, in fact, as some other philosophers I could mention. But you must see him at night, when Dick has caught him a mouse, and we come and feed him. And here are Dick's rabbits and his guinea-pigs; but he has fed them already, I see. So there is nothing more to look after, but the raven and the old donkey.'

They visited the raven, in a corner of the courtyard, where he was tethered to an object like a hencoop; and Dagmar fed him with the greatest care and circumspection, lest he should take a fancy to a part of her finger. Then they went down the long gravelled pathway to the sunny apple orchard, by the fence of which the old donkey, who had carried Day in a pannier when she was a baby, was waiting, expectant of his morning treat.

He had all the remaining corn in the basket, and then Day climbed upon the fence and gathered a large apple, and sitting balanced upon the topmost bar, set her white teeth into it with great enjoyment.

Raymond did not love hard and rather unripe apples, nor was he fond of sitting on a rail; but he was not averse to leaning against it in the shade of the apple-trees, and watching his pretty cousin.

There was no sign in her manner of that pleasure in doing something unusual which makes some girls piquant and some objectionable. There was nothing of the romp about her, she had plainly no idea but that all girls lived much the same free pleasant life as hers, and just now her eyes were very grave and full of deep meditation.

'A penny for your thoughts, Day,' said her cousin at last, when the silence had lasted so long as to be a little wearisome.

She smiled, without taking her eyes from that far-off point on the horizon on which they had been fixed, and held out her little sunburnt palm.

He took a penny out of his pocket and laid it in her hand, and she started and looked down upon him.

'Heads, I will tell you. Tails, I won't,' she said, spinning it in the air with an adroitness that must certainly have been learnt from Dick. 'Tails! The fates have decided; and doubtless it is for the best. I dare say you would not have understood me.' She dropped the penny into his reluctant hand, and sprang down from her uneasy perch. 'Come,' she said, 'we are being very idle. Let us go and do some German.'

They went in; but Raymond did not find her so amusing as she had been out-of-doors. A lesson was a lesson to Day, and though Raymond gave her plenty of opportunities to turn it from a lesson in German to a lesson in flirtation, she did not seem disposed to profit by them.

Altogether, he was not sorry when the luncheon-bell rang, and his eager young scholar put up her books, and rushed out to the porch to see if she could descry Dick on his way home.

Directly luncheon was over, the whole party prepared to go up to the Court. The Squire went with his wife, volubly explaining to her some improvements and alterations which he meant to persuade Maurice Claughton to make. Dick and Day ran on in front like two children, and Raymond and Agnes were left to walk together. If Agnes felt an unwillingness to accept the small change of 'society talk' from this man who had once been bound to give her of his very best, she was far too much a woman of the world to let it appear. There were no awkward pauses, no gaps of silence, as they walked on together towards the Court, and they talked of the place and the people, of the young owner of the Court who was coming home to his own again, and of other local topics, as if they had no mutual interests or memories but such as Winstead could afford.

The Court was about half a mile from the Hall, standing on the

opposite hillside, in the midst of a real though not extensive park, and backed by beautiful hanging woods of oak and beech.

The Park was beautiful also, full of fine old oak and thorn trees, and picturesquely diversified by tangled thicket and open glade; but the Court, as it stood on a smooth plateau between the Park and the woods, was by no means beautiful, though it might claim to be called stately. Some Claughton, late in King William and Queen Mary's reign, had advised himself to pull down the quaint, rambling old edifice in which he had been born, and to build in its place a huge, square mansion, stuccoed, and painted a light grey, with a balustrade running round its flat roof, adorned at regular intervals by huge vases or urns. The windows were innumerable, and all of the same size and pattern, and the courtyard, with its somewhat more picturesque stables and offices, was carefully concealed at the back, lest anything should break the square monotony.

In the middle of each of the four sides a door—made to look as much like the windows as possible—opened out on to a short double flight of steps. There was no flower-garden to be seen, it was at some distance off, carefully concealed by shrubs; and within sight of the house was nothing but fine old trees and long stretches of turf, somewhat suffering now from years of neglect.

On the same plateau as the house, and within a few hundred yards of it, stood the parish church, a modest little grey edifice, half smothered in ornamental trees. It was more than a mile from the Vicarage, and from the village, and seemed to have been built chiefly for the convenience of the owners of the Court and their dependents. But it was long since they had made any use of it; for the Claughtons, for many generations past, had been Roman Catholics.

Here, however, the church still stood, its little graveyard full of grey stones trenching upon the Court gardens; and the people passed up through the Park, bold in five centuries' 'right of way,' to carry on their 'heretical' worship almost under the very roof of its owner.

When the four elders reached the Court they found Dagmar and her boy companion waiting for them on the steps before the south door. They had already rung the bell, and were parleying with a good-tempered-looking elderly woman who had opened the door; and as the others came up they all passed in together.

The entrance-hall was a fine room, well furnished in an old-fashioned style, with a wide noble fireplace, a long dining-table, and tall screens to keep off the draught from the doors. Beyond was another hall, taking up the centre of the house from top to bottom, lined with oak panelling and hung with family portraits, with galleries running along its sides and oaken stairways climbing from one gallery to another up to the third and last storey.

The pictures were not very interesting, though some were well

painted enough. They were much in the style of ordinary family portraits, even to the somewhat disreputable-looking lady supposed to be by Lely, and the stout gentleman in the full-bottomed wig who got money enough from Sir Robert Walpole to retrieve the fortunes of the family.

Dagmar ran up to the first landing, beckoning Raymond to follow her.

'There!' she said, 'that is my favourite picture; the only one worth looking at.'

It was a more interesting portrait than the others, possibly a Vandyke, having at any rate the picturesque costume of the period, and that air of individuality which the great painter gave to all his portraits.

It was the head of a young man, not handsome, but good-looking, with fine eyes and brown curling hair. The lips pouted slightly, and the whole face, especially the lips and eyes, had a look of baffled discontent, frank and pathetic like that of a child.

'I like that!' said Dagmar, leaning against the balustrade of the gallery, and looking into the eyes of the picture with her head a little thrown back. 'He looks to me like the "*Heir of Lynne*" when the world began to go wrong with him.'

'The Heir of Lynne?' said Raymond, in languid questioning fashion, also studying the portrait, but finding it less interesting than the living picture before him.

'Don't you know him? How he wasted all his goods, and sold his lands, and spent his money in feasting his friends? Then of course they turned against him, when he was poor. Yes!' she said, apostrophising the pictured face, 'that was just how you looked when—

> 'One, I wis, was not at home,
> Another had payed his golde away,
> Another called him "thriftless loon,"
> And bade him sharpely wend his way.'

'He certainly looks more discontented than anything but an empty pocket could well account for,' said Raymond. 'But a good family rarely preserves portraits of its penniless members.'

'Oh! things mended with him afterwards,' she said, leading the way downstairs. 'If he had been the real Heir of Lynne he might have been rich enough some day to have his portrait painted. And the painter might have seen that look and perpetuated it, as more interesting than anything that he wore afterwards in his prosperous days.'

'Do you think then that pain is more interesting than pleasure?'

'Of course!' answered Dagmar, standing for a moment to listen for the voices of the others, then following them in the direction of the great drawing-room. 'No face can be worth looking at till it has known pain as well as pleasure.'

'I deny that,' said Raymond, throwing a special significance into his soft flexible voice. 'I know at least one face that conveys no hint of pain, but only clear unmitigated sunshine; and owes its chief charm among many charms to that very fact.'

Dagmar did not seem to be paying much attention.

They had entered the drawing-room, but it was empty. The others had gone on before them, and the large room, with its swathed and shrouded furniture dimly seen through the light from half-shuttered windows, had strange and ghostly effect.

'I like this room,' said Dagmar, stepping softly across it. 'I think I like it because it frightens me a little. It looks more real and yet more ghostly than the others. Everything is so ready for use, so exactly as it was left; it looks as if some kind of life must be going on here all the while. And yet one knows that no one does live here, unless the ghosts come in the long moonlight nights and hold a kind of party here and tell each other what they used to do in these very rooms when they were warm and alive.'

'I'm afraid that implies that ghosts talk scandal,' said Raymond, coolly. 'I had hoped that that vice at least was confined to this present world.'

She smiled, as if his ignorance of the spiritual world was far too great to be capable of enlightenment.

'See!' she said, standing before a water-colour portrait more modern than any of those in the hall, whose handsome ebony frame stood out boldly against the tarnished gilding of the stamped leather hangings. 'See! this is a portrait of the last Mr. Claughton, the father of the Myth. I have heard my father speak of him so often that I feel as if I had known him quite well. He was a Roman Catholic, you know, and lived a great deal abroad, and he married a young Frenchwoman. She was a lady, but she was quite poor, and I think she was a governess before he married her. Then they came home here to live, and Maurice was born, and they were very happy for five years. And then Mr. Claughton caught typhoid fever and died, and very soon after that Mrs. Claughton went away. She hated the place and everything in it for his sake, because she had loved him so much; and she never came here again.'

'What became of her?' asked Raymond, not by any means sure that he had not heard the whole story more than once before, but finding the voice of the speaker pleasant enough to listen to.

'She went abroad and took her child with her. Once about five years after she brought him as far as London, and father went there to meet her on business, and saw them both. Then she went abroad again; and no one here has ever seen either of them since.'

'She is dead now, is she not?'

'Yes! she died when Maurice was about eighteen. Look at her husband's face; is not it nice? One does not wonder that she should not soon have been consoled for his death.'

The face of the portrait was very different from that of the distant ancestor who hung outside in the hall.

Brown-haired, grey-eyed, with a bright, proud, eager look upon the well-cut features, it was indeed a face for a woman to love; none the less so perhaps for a certain boyish, hot-headed expression that seemed to speak of a soul that neither could nor would grow old.

'Do you think then that a woman needs no argument for constancy but a handsome face?' asked Raymond, smiling.

'How should I know?' said Dagmar, between a smile and a frown. 'But I see a good deal more there than merely a handsome face—and so might you.'

She turned abruptly from the picture as she spoke, opened another door, and led the way into another room, a library, scantily and stiffly furnished, and lined with old leather-covered volumes of an appalling solidity and unreadableness.

Beyond was a smaller drawing-room, a pretty sunny room, where they found the rest of the party, the Squire pointing out to his wife sundry places where the walls had yielded to the damp, and Agnes standing by the old-fashioned grand piano fingering softly over the yellow keys.

'I wonder how many years it is since that piano has been touched,' said Dagmar, coming to her side, and laying a hand upon her shoulder.

'Twenty, at least,' said Agnes, smiling. 'It will respond to nothing newer than "*Home, sweet Home*," or, "*She wore a wreath of Roses.*" Anything more modern and rapid makes it wheeze and pant and hold its sides as if it were in the last stage of decrepitude.'

'How does a piano hold its sides?' enquired Dick, coming back from a fruitless putting of his nose into an empty cupboard.

'You are a boy of no imagination,' said Dagmar, severely. 'I have seen them do it, often!'—and she put her arm round Agnes' waist and swept her off into the next room, a cosy, tiny place, very bare of furniture, but full of a faint pleasant smell of dead rose-leaves and with the afternoon sunlight lying across the floor.

'Places like this make me very unhappy,' she said, standing still in the sunshine, looking round her with wide wistful eyes. 'They look as if they might be so pleasant and had somehow missed it. So much happy life, so many bright hours, might have been spent in this room, and here it has been standing empty for more than twenty years.'

'Rooms don't grow old as quickly as human beings,' said Agnes, with a sigh. 'They don't get *passées* and outlive their day. In a year or two perhaps this house will be alive again, and this room will be full of life and laughter, and all the silent melancholy years that it has been shut up and empty will count for nothing. It is only we who cannot afford to wait for happiness, for fear we should not be able to enjoy it when it comes.'

'One thing is certain,' said the Squire, coming into the room with

his wife, 'the house must be put into thorough repair from top to bottom. And a pretty turn-out it will be.'

'It will be dreadfully uncomfortable to live in all the while,' said Mrs. Tyndal, following out her own train of thought.

'Why, yes!' said her husband. 'He can't live in it, of course. He will have to make his home with us for a little while. And now come upstairs.'

'Don't go up,' said Dagmar, beckoning to Raymond and Agnes. 'There is nothing to be seen up there but great bare bedrooms, with the most hideous papers you ever saw. Come out, and let us go and see the church.'

'It is not so very long since I was there,' said Raymond, lazily following her.

'Oh! but you must see the alterations which Mr. Layton has made—which Papa groans over every Sunday when we go to church.'

'Has he done much in that line?' asked Raymond, as they walked towards the grey stone arch, draped with ivy, that served for an entrance to the churchyard from this side.

'No!' said Day, 'not so much as I should have done. But I think he is biding his time, and he will get it all his own way presently. There is one change, at any rate, we need not go down to the village for the key, for the church is always open now in the daytime.'

They passed up the narrow gravel path, between the drooping yews, and the grey timeworn stones, into the little deep porch that in its massive rudeness was almost like a cave in a grey rock.

Then Dagmar pushed open the heavy door of blackened oak and they went softly in. It was a strange little church, unnecessarily massive and heavy, and but for the little irregular windows that pierced its walls all round, one might have fancied that the square rugged pillars were supporting the floor of some great cathedral. The old high pews still remained, square and handsome in the front of the church, narrow and dark at the back; the Court pew with red baize linings on the north side matching the Hall pew with green linings on the south.

The whole edifice had that peculiar, musty, not unpleasant smell common to old books and old churches, but some of the old leaden casements were open, admitting the fresh sweet autumn air. The church showed many tokens of care and new arrangement, and the great reading-desk, which Raymond remembered well, had vanished, and was replaced by a slender lectern of polished oak.

'I don't like it,' said Raymond, decidedly, after they had stood for a moment looking round them. 'It is neither one thing nor the other now. It used to breathe an atmosphere of centuries ago, full of stagnation and rest and peace. Now there is a disturbing element. Why can these parsons never let things alone?'

Dagmar looked at him, and led the way again towards the door.

'We are in a transition state just now,' she said, softly. 'I don't think Mr. Layton will be content to remain long neither one thing nor the other. Do you remember that?'

She pointed to the pillar nearest the door. Just below the capital a stone had been removed, leaving a small square hole, in front of which was a small square of dim glass.

'The Crusader's heart!' said Agnes, while Dick stood on tiptoe with never-failing curiosity to look at the small shrivelled object, like a withered leaf, behind the glass. 'Yes, I can remember that as long as I remember anything.'

'So can I!' said Raymond, as he shut the church door behind them, remembering as he did so that the last time that Agnes and he had stood in that porch together it had been as a betrothed couple.

'I remember,' he went on, with a smile that covered a sigh, 'once, in my extreme youth, beginning to write a poem on that subject. It was a long time ago, I will admit, but I seem to remember something about it. The knight went to the Holy Land broken-hearted for the death of his lady, who was buried in this church. He had sworn never to see the place again; but, dying abroad, he sent back his heart, that it might be laid at her feet.'

'Then why did they stick it up in the pillar?' asked Dick, fully believing that Raymond was speaking of facts.

'I know,' broke in Dagmar. 'There was a beautiful picture of the lady lying all night upon her bier, there in the church before the altar, and the knight kneeling beside it till the sunshine shone in upon them both through the east window, and—

'Showed his sword of knightly steel
Broken, cast on the marble floor;
Trenchant blade from the cross-hilt parted,
Never to shine in the battle more——'

'Why, Day!' cried Raymond, interrupting her, 'how did you come to know anything about it?'

'By art magic! No, I have got the entire production—only it isn't entire—in my possession now. You left it all in that old escritoire you used when you stayed with us that summer, and a little while ago I fell heir to the old thing and all its contents. Why didn't you finish it, Raymond? It was very good.'

'You shall finish it,' said Raymond, smiling. 'My poetic vein is exhausted.'

'Tell me, at any rate, how you meant to end the story,' she said, coming a little nearer, with a familiar, almost coaxing air.

But before he had had time to answer, Dick, who had flown on ahead, came flying back.

'Day! Oh, I say, come here,' he cried. 'Come and look how they are trimming up the old peacocks and tea-kettles and things.'

'Peacocks and tea-kettles!' said Dagmar, scornfully, but followed Dick, and in an instant they were racing in and out of the windings

of the clipt yew hedges like a pair of young fawns, while Raymond and Agnes were left to walk soberly together.

That night, after lying awake even longer than usual, Raymond had a dream—one of those dreams in which some malicious sprite seems to set before us a parable, childishly simple, yet bearing unwelcome reference to that side of our character and wishes which we would hide even from ourselves.

All that evening Dagmar had been humming at intervals

> 'Maid of Athens, ere we part,
> Give, oh! give me back my heart,'

and the song, with its defiance of physiology and reason, pursued Raymond in his dream.

It seemed to him that the dry, withered, leaf-like thing which they had seen in the church was his own heart; quite distinct and apart from himself, but all the heart he had, and not seeming to him at all an unreasonable or unsatisfactory one. But Agnes had it in her possession, and he was looking for her, all through the mazes of the Court gardens, to get it again from her that he might give it to Dagmar. Up and down the long grassy paths he sought her, with that sense of the need of haste and the impossibility of hastening which is so often the most painful part of a painful dream. And at last he saw her, at the end of a green alley, standing by the old grey sun-dial with it in her hand. But as he hastened towards her a cold wind from the north blew past him, and reached her before him, and whirled the dry unsubstantial thing from her open palm, and swept it away in an airy witch dance of a myriad of withered leaves.

(To be continued.)

A PLUNGE IN TROUBLED WATERS.

BY MISS C. R. COLERIDGE.

'Matter of course or matter of choice.'

CHAPTER IV.

TALENTS IN USE.

MRS. WOODFORD'S reflections were interrupted at this point by the entrance of Esther, who came running in from Sunday-school.

'Mother, do pray let me go for a walk with Polly Mason. Just on East Hill Road; and we'll be in in time for tea.'

'Well, Etty,' said Mrs. Woodford, 'I don't want to keep you from all the neighbours. Only mind and behave as you know is right. Is Alice going?'

'No, mother; she doesn't want to go.'

Esther rushed out, and presently Alice came in slowly.

'Don't you want to take a walk, Alice?'

'I don't want to go with Polly Mason. I don't like her. She's not like Rosa Beckford, nor any one in Roseberry.'

'Ally,' said Mrs. Woodford, 'I'm not sure as we're quite in the right, to think there's no good out of Roseberry.'

'Well, mother, there isn't,' said Alice. 'Oh, mother, I don't like any of it; and, please—I want to tell you—that I'd rather not be confirmed here. 'Tisn't like home; and I'm sure I should get no good from it.'

'Alice!'

'Oh, mother, if there was Miss Alice to help me, and Rosy to go with, and Dr. Goodall to teach us, 'twould be so different. But here——'

'Did Miss Walters speak to you about it to-day?'

'Yes. Mr. Anson came in and gave it out, and Miss Walters said she hoped we should give in our names. But I'd rather wait, and go and stay with Granny. I aint quite fourteen.'

'I don't think father would like you to wait, Ally,' said her mother, doubtfully.

'Oh, mother, 'tis so bad sometimes at day-school. There's girls of all sorts. Most don't think at all, and some that do, say they only learn the Catechism because it's the rule, and they don't believe it; and we say it right off as fast as possible, and never curtsey—not in the Creed. And the girls say that we have it so often this half because the Religious Inspector's coming, and next half we sha'n't say it at all. And when Mr. Anson comes in and gives us a lesson,

nobody attends. And the worst girls have given in their names, and nobody refuses them, nor knows if they tell lies and use bad talk. They say they'll have a holiday and white frocks. And Lotty Benson, she does behave better; she says Confirmation is nothing but fine clothes and empty forms, and who's the better for it? And they're so rude—the girls, mother. They never say thank you, nor make room. And I think I'd rather leave off school on Sundays when I leave the week-day, and learn my collect at home—and think of what Miss Alice taught us.'

'Well, Alice, I think there wasn't much use in sending you to day-school here; but I don't think you're old enough to give up Sunday-schooling.'

'Lotty Benson says that we must keep ourselves to ourselves, if we want to be respectable in this place; and I don't like to go with these girls. I know I sha'n't get any good from them. And I can't listen to Miss Walters for thinking that she isn't dear Miss Alice.'

Mrs. Woodford sat and reflected. She was very much inclined to agree with her daughter. She looked at Alice, who put her head on one side with an air partly sentimental and partly self-satisfied; although, poor child, her regrets were perfectly genuine.

''Tis all true, Ally,' said the mother presently; 'but if you leave off going to Sunday-school there'll be no one to look after Esther and Sue. But there, I'll speak to father, and abide by what he says.'

Accordingly, when Woodford came in to tea, the case was laid before him; but he shook his head.

'If Alice knows better than is common, 'tis her duty to look after her sisters,' he said, 'and not to send them where they may behave ill without her.'

'True,' said Mrs. Woodford, ''tis clear that that's her first duty.'

'And as for Confirmation, mother, if you consider it's time for her to go up, it's my opinion as she ought to go. And sure I am as any minister can teach her a deal more than she knows.'

'It's not like dear Roseberry,' said Alice, tearfully.

'No, it ain't. But since our state of life is Dulworth, and not Roseberry, 'tis Dulworth we've got to do our duty in, and reconcile to our minds—whether it's glass or classes. Which is nearly a rhyme, though I wasn't intending it. And mother is sure to see her way through.'

'You're a deal wiser than I am, father,' said Mrs. Woodford, wiping her eyes, 'and you've made it clear to me. I've been near making a great mistake, and Alice 'll go to Sunday-school, and say no more about it.'

Alice subsided; but she felt a little as if her fine feelings had been neglected and put aside. She went to the Confirmation classes in a critical frame of mind, and when she could not answer several of Mr. Anson's first set of questions, felt sure that they were not the sort of questions which girls could be expected to know.

'Dear Miss Alice would have set them different.'

'Well,' said Etty, who was a very downright girl, 'Miss Alice never taught you to think you knew everything.'

In the meantime Mrs. Woodford had taken her husband's hint, and acted it out in ways that might never have occurred to him.

If Dulworth was, as her husband put it, their state of life, she must make the best of it, and look out for the best ways of bringing up her children in the midst of it. She had been strongly tempted to retire into the character of the neighbour 'who didn't speak to any one;' but she remembered that when she had once paid a visit to a sister-in-law in London, that exclusive lady, who occupied part of a house, had remarked on the occasion of a wedding in the other half, 'that there might be something going on, but that she was no gossip, and never observed other people.' Mrs. Woodford had argued that one might be a neighbour without being a gossip, and now she set herself to find out how. She must not alienate Lily and aggravate Robert, and lead Esther to make private acquaintances, because she disliked the religious and social atmosphere of Dulworth. So she promised to attend the Choral Society's Christmas concert, allowed Robert to invite a select errand-boy home to tea, and listened to the recitations which they were preparing for their entertainment; and though she greatly astonished the town boy by telling him that the piece chosen was silly-like, and something of Shakespeare's would be much more poetical, she abstained from remarking that it made boys conceited to think they could speak up and amuse their betters, though she thought so. And finally she set herself to be civil to the rest of Laura Terrace, when occasion offered. Esther had already made friends with Polly Mason; and after some doubts she allowed her to join the Band of Hope, to which the latter belonged, and which was connected more or less with the day-school, and managed by a lady who seemed very liberal in the matter of treats. To be sure the meetings involved coming home in the dark in the winter; but as Lily put it, 'If girls live in a town they must learn the way to walk out in the dark properly,' and Polly and Esther could come home together. Alice did not want to join.

'I always do drink water,' she said. 'What is the use of a society for it?—and I don't like rude girls.'

''Tis the example,' said Esther, grandly.

'Then, Esther, look you set a good one, for there's other things to mind besides temperance, though that's wanted sore enough.'

'There were no societies nor bands in Roseberry,' said Alice, sighing.

'I think we were all a band together,' said Mrs. Woodford, with a feeling of having an idea she could hardly grasp.

'The lady who had seen better days,' was a neighbour to whom Mrs. Woodford could not object; but Mrs. Almond had practised 'keeping herself to herself' ever since the death of her husband, a

commercial traveller, had left her a widow, with one little girl. Violet was a nice quiet girl, pale and delicate from being deprived of air, exercise, and companionship, and ignorant of everything but reading, which her mother had taught her. However, she fell in with Alice at the Confirmation class, where she sat in utter silence, certainly never giving trouble, but never taking in a single idea. She proved perfectly incapable of answering any written questions, and Alice, moved to pity by her blushing annoyance, spoke to her as they came out.

'I'm not coming again,' said Violet. 'Mamma's going to tell Mr. Anson that I'll wait till he can examine me privately. She thinks young ladies oughtn't to go to mixed classes. She says she'll tell him I've been too delicate to learn, and then he'll give me my ticket.'

'Will he?' said Alice. 'But don't you want to learn? And he can't pass you unless you can say your Catechism.'

'Why not?'

'Why—look in the Prayer-book. It says we must know it or we can't be confirmed,' said Alice, showing her the passage.

'I'll learn it by myself then. Mother said ladies didn't want that sort of preparation.'

'Why—they have more, because they know more. Miss Grace and Miss Beatrice went to the classes last year with all the others.'

'Well, we keep to ourselves in Dulworth. Mamma can play the piano; and when she was a girl she took tea with young ladies whose papa was in the law.'

Alice did not know much about people with papas in the law, the 'young ladies' of her acquaintance all belonging to either rectors or squires; but she sympathised with the exclusiveness, not connecting it with the ignorance—at which she was greatly shocked. She was pleased when Violet, with her mamma's permission, invited her to tea, with a view to looking over the questions, and having another try at the class. Alice was quite well informed enough to be of great assistance, and Mrs. Almond condescendingly came to see Mrs. Woodford, who, with a villager's appreciation of real rank, thought even less of her piano and her pretensions than they deserved.

The acquaintance of the Curtises, whose father 'had no religion,' was made in another way. Mrs. Curtis's baby had a fit, and Mrs. Woodford went to the rescue, with the remedies her experience suggested; and in the gratitude for the saving of its life, Mrs. Curtis poured out all her history and all her troubles. She had been brought up to Church, and so had Curtis; but he 'had took up with friends who had led him away'; and, though he was a kind husband, never would consent to the baptism of the younger children. And then she confided to Mrs. Woodford how the district lady had wanted

her to have them done unknown to Curtis, and how she had nearly consented, and Mr. Anson had once been to see her about it—when the rector had come home from a holiday, and had insisted on the father's consent being obtained first.

'Which were almost a pity, Mrs. Woodford, since no doubt it was for the children's good, and Curtis needn't have heard a word of it—as he never did.'

'I don't think I could teach my children to keep anything from their father,' said Mrs. Woodford, confronted with a problem of which she had never dreamed.

'Well, it is a pity to offend the ladies,' said Mrs. Curtis, 'for Curtis's work ain't what it might be, and Miss Allen would have given them new frocks. But Curtis, he say that religion is all for what we can get.'

Mrs. Woodford thought it possible that, in the case of his wife, Mr. Curtis might have some ground for his opinion.

'I don't think,' she said, 'that keeping things close would recommend religion to him. But I'd not hide from him that I felt it a sore trouble; and I'd pray day and night to judge right about it, and have a way opened.'

Mrs. Curtis sighed, and said that she was sure it couldn't be visited on her, as she had done her best; while Mrs. Woodford gave her a good deal more pity than she was aware of needing; and they continued on friendly terms, Woodford occasionally smoking a pipe with Curtis, and replying to his wife's anxious questions as to what they talked about, that 'he left people to enjoy their own opinions.'

This was not the view of their other neighbour, Mr. Benson, at whose house the 'Gospel Mission' was held, for he made the most strenuous efforts to convert Mrs. Woodford, whom he regarded as in darkness nearly as deep as Curtis. Mrs. Woodford could neither accept his talk as 'all very good,' without seeing that it did not agree with what she herself had been brought up to, nor always answer his arguments, while to hers he was utterly impervious; but she maintained the fight, and on leisure evenings Benson would stroll in with a magazine or religious newspaper, to 'lay a matter before her,' while Woodford looked on and thought what a scholar his wife was. And Mrs. Benson, who was not controversial, petted the children.

Before Christmas a new neighbour came into the Terrace, in the shape of an acquaintance of Lily's, made at the Choral Society. This was a young Mr. Alfred Bailey, a clerk in the office of the railway on which Dulworth was situated. He came to lodge in the Terrace, and pursued with evident eagerness the acquaintance of the Woodfords. He was a well-conducted young man, and a Churchman; and though Lily vehemently denied that he came 'after her,' Mrs. Woodford could not have found fault if he had, though he was another perplexing element in the whirl around her.

He came from London, and there he had come across some of the members of the Kyrle Society, who were engaged in spreading enlightenment by means of concerts, pictures, and popular entertainments. Mr. Bailey applied the principles thus acquired by assisting at every Penny Reading in Dulworth. The especial means by which he brightened and sweetened the lives, and elevated the souls of his fellow-creatures, was by reciting poetry of so harrowing and awful a description that 'Eugene Aram' might be regarded as playful and cheerful in comparison. Nature had given him a fresh-coloured, pleasant face, with light curly hair, and nice blue eyes, which he rolled tragically, and fair eyebrows, with which he practised terrifying frowns. He was clever, not at all ill-educated, and very much in earnest, and, like every one else, he poured out his views to Mrs. Woodford.

'What? she wasn't certain that she liked her boys to recite in public, and certainly not her girls? What were people's talents given them for but to be used for the benefit of their fellow-creatures, and not rolled in napkins? They should be consecrated by use, which he had heard in a sermon at St. Augustine's, where he sang in the choir.

'And,' he concluded, 'if Miss Lily would sing a solo at the next Penny Reading, it would be a great kindness, and a good work for her fellow-creatures.'

'Well,' said Mrs. Woodford, shrewdly, 'that might be, if young women didn't mostly think more of showing their faces than of their talents, or their fellow-creatures either. Besides, I've heard ladies sing, and Lily don't sing well enough to carry it off.'

'Ah, but it's the attempt that's elevating,' said Mr. Bailey, 'and leads to a real interest in the subject.'

Mrs. Woodford retained her doubts, but as Lily herself declined to sing on the ground of nervousness, the discussion dropped; but Mr. Bailey's views were another novelty, and perplexed the woman, who could not help listening to what people had to say. She did not realise that most people might have come to Laura Terrace, and never found out what anybody was thinking of. Every little house in the row had the same number of red bricks to ornament its yellow surface, and the same bow window, and neat front door, but each had a different aspect. The Woodfords' was flowery, the Masons' was untidy, Curtis had a turn for grottoes and window-boxes representing green fences with white five-barred gates in the centre; and the Bensons' had a little gravelled court, with a notice board of the Mission. It occurred to Mrs. Woodford that the people inside were just as unlike each other as their front gardens. She thought that she wished that they were all on her own pattern, but somehow she found life interesting in Dulworth.

One other acquaintance of Lily's completed their visiting list. The assistant master at the National School belonged to the Choral Society.

He was a very serious grave young man, of the name of Cummings, and he always had an admirable excuse for calling, connected with the boys' conduct or home lessons.

But, even if Mr. Bailey was moved by a pure desire to hear what Mrs. Woodford thought of 'The Midnight Murder,' as a subject for recitation, no one entertained any doubt as to the nature of Mr. Cummings' attraction.

(To be continued.)

CAMEOS FROM ENGLISH HISTORY.

CAMEO CCXLV.

1661–1665.

THE ACT OF UNIFORMITY.

To establish a complete and absolute uniformity of doctrine and worship throughout the kingdom was the dream of the highest souls of the time. It did not seem an unreasonable hope. Before the Reformation there had been external unity, and even yet, each state in Germany was outwardly at least of the same profession as its ruler. The nation at large was weary of schisms, and it was hoped that a conference between the leading men on all sides might bring about a general union.

The Presbyterian leader was Richard Baxter, a man of great piety and ability, and entirely uncompromising in his opinions. He had held the Vicarage of Kidderminster throughout the Commonwealth days, and had been so much loved and followed there that the return of the rightful Vicar was by no means welcome. The fact of his intrusion made his expulsion necessary; but he was in such high esteem that he was offered a Bishopric, which he refused to accept, though he declared that there was no portion of the doctrine of the Prayer-book with which he disagreed, and he remained at Kidderminster as a lecturer.

Scotch and English Presbyterians were willing to accept a moderate episcopacy, provided they were bound by no oaths or subscriptions, and also a Liturgy, if there were liberty to add extemporary prayers; but the Scots wanted to have the surplice prohibited even in the King's own chapel. To this Charles answered sharply, that while he gave them liberty he would not have his own taken from him. James Sharp, the minister sent from Scotland to represent the Kirk, wrote with little expectation that the Presbyterians would prevail: 'I see generally the Cassock men appearing everywhere boldly, the Liturgy in many places setting up. The service in the Chapel at Whitehall is to be set up with organs and choristers as before.'

He wrote as if grieved, but there is reason to think he had made up his mind as to the part he intended to take.

A declaration was issued by the King offering toleration to all sects; but as the Presbyterians thought this was intended to favour the Roman Catholics, Baxter objected to it, on the ground that 'some opinions were tolerable, and others intolerable,' and, of course, in his view, nobody but Richard Baxter could draw the line between them.

However, the Conference was to take place in the spring of 1661, beginning on March 25th, between twelve Bishops and twelve Nonconformist divines.

Archbishop Juxon was too aged for the difficult task of presiding, nor had he ever been noted for learning, so the presidency was allotted to Sheldon, Bishop of London, and the place of meeting was to be the grand old hall of the Savoy Palace in the Strand. Each of the twelve on either side was allowed nine assistants, who might act as deputies in case of incapacitation of the principals, and very wisely, four months were fixed as the term of the deliberations.

The proceedings began by Sheldon's declaring on the part of the Church that all were fully satisfied with the Book of Common Prayer, and that it was the part of their adversaries to state in writing what alterations were desired on the other hand.

By Baxter's influence, the other Puritan ministers agreed to put all their objections together in one paper, while he actually undertook to draw up a Liturgy. He used the Bible, Prayer-book, Directory, and L'Estrange's 'Alliance of Divine Office,' and in a single fortnight produced an entire *Reformed Liturgy*, which he did not quite venture to propose as a substitute for the Prayer-book, but as an alternative at the will of the minister. The language was almost wholly Scriptural, but the Church people could not but feel it insulting that one man should claim to have his fortnight's work preferred to the growth of ages, under the hands of Fathers, Saints, and Martyrs.

He had been quicker than the other divines with their paper of objections; so he turned to them likewise, and made them so sharp and violent, that his brethren would not accept them, and gave in their own paper on the 4th of May. Their objections were: to the Responses in prayer, to Lent, to Saints' days, to the prohibition of extemporary prayer, to the Apocryphal Lessons, to the repairing to the Holy Table for the Communion Service, to the use of the term priest, to some obsolete words, to the assumption that all the congregation are in a state of grace; also to the brevity of the collects and prayers, desiring a long uninterrupted form. Moreover, that the Catechism should be fuller, and that those old objects of their dislike —the surplice and marriage-ring, together with the signing of the cross after Baptism, and the kneeling at the Holy Communion— should be optional.

This petition was read, and was answered, point by point, after a dignified declaration that the faithful Church people deserved as much consideration as those who had remained outside.

Responses, the answer said, conduced to devotion, and joined the congregation with the minister.

Lent might be used to edification and devotion. As to Saints' days being human institutions, so was the Feast of Dedication, which our Lord duly observed. Extemporary prayer is dangerous. The Apocrypha is full of instruction. The stronger arguments for the

word priest were kept back; it was only pleaded that the distinction from a deacon was needful. The treating the audience as in a state of grace was after the example of St. Paul in the Epistles. The right of the Church to decree ceremonies was maintained; but the Bishops offered fourteen concessions, chiefly changes of words become obsolete.

These did not satisfy them, and Baxter drew up a very long reply, which was only given in ten days before the four months were up.

There followed a *vivâ voce* argument between the two parties. The Bishops held to it that there was no need for altering the Prayer-book, unless some defect in it was proved, and none had been made clear to them.

Eight points were then handed in as objections, but the whole argument resolved itself into the debate whether a command to observe a custom, not in itself unlawful, can be sinful; and this discussion lasted out the allotted term. This dispute was like a circulating decimal, incapable of coming to an end, and thus the four months closed in the midst of it; and all that could be done was to report to the King that, though all were agreed in wishing for union, the parties were divided as to the means.

Parliament meantime was sitting, and a very Cavalier Parliament it was, with not above fifty or sixty Presbyterians in it, and the greater number of the gentlemen who composed it, sore with the remembrance of wrongs and injuries suffered from their adversaries. They were afraid that the Prayer-book should be watered down to please the Presbyterians; and therefore in July, before the Savoy Conference was ended, an order was brought in and passed on the 25th of July, 1661, that, 'A Committee be appointed to view the several laws for confirming the Liturgy of the Church of England, and to make search whether the original book of the Liturgy annexed to the Act, passed in the 5th and 6th years of King Edward VI., be still extant, and to provide for an effectual conformity to the Liturgy of the Church for the time to come.'

This Committee recommended a few amendments, which were made, and on the 9th of July, the Bill of Uniformity, as it was called, was passed by a large majority and sent up to the Lords; but the Lords wished the matter to wait, knowing that the King intended to have the Book revised by Convocation, so that they deferred the consideration of the Bill until Parliament had been prorogued on the 30th of November.

Convocation had of course been sitting and arranging the thanksgiving service for the anniversary of the King's Restoration on the 29th of May. In October, came the King's letters directing them to revise the Prayer-book, and it was decided that the Convocations of the two provinces should both appoint delegates to meet at the house of the Bishop of Ely for the purpose.

The Bishops were eight in number: Wren of Ely, Skinner of

Oxford, Warner of Rochester, Henchman of Salisbury, Morley of Worcester, Sanderson of Lincoln, Nicholson of Gloucester, Cosin of Durham, the last not least, either in dignity or in liturgical learning, for in both he stood pre-eminent. He had been friend and librarian to the two great Bishops, Andrewes and Overall, and his own chaplain and assistant was William Sancroft, by-and-by to become greatly noted in the history of the Church. Bishop Cosin had brought a folio copy of the Prayer-book at 1619, as it stood after the revision of James I., and in the margin he had made notes of all the alterations he desired. This was copied out by Sancroft, but the original is still preserved in the library of the cathedral at Durham. Most of his emendations were adopted, but not all, and it is impossible to specify them, since the entire number was nearly 600, generally only single words, directions in a rubric, or the place of a prayer. It was the last touch given to the actual services of prayer, and it was all in the Catholic, not the Puritan direction, though some changes which the Bishops would have wished for were omitted, out of the desire not to put stumbling-blocks in the way of the ignorant or disaffected.

On the 20th of December, the work was finished, agreed on by the Bishops, and sent to the Lower House. It was in 540 pages, and was attached to the Act of Uniformity. It is still preserved in the library of the House of Lords.

It then was sent to the King, who kept it waiting for several weeks, when Parliament, having again assembled, a message was sent from the Commons to the Lords to beg that the Bill of Uniformity might be considered. The Lords answered that they could not take it in hand without the proposed Prayer-book, and the Earl of Dorset complained, on February 12th, 1661, of the delay, when the Bishop of London promised that it should soon be brought forward. Thus urged, a Privy Council was summoned, at which five of the Bishops were present, and the alterations were inspected, probably in a very different manner from that in which Charles's theological grandfather had indulged, and a recommendation of it was duly signed by him and sent down to the House of Peers, sealed with the Great Seal on the 17th of March, 1662. There was no examination of it in the Lords; but when the Commons received it, they compared it with the former one, though having no debate upon it—only, so entirely was the House transformed, that they requested that Convocation would enjoin the use of reverent gestures in the service, and require that the ring, the surplice and baptismal cross should be always used. So entire was the victory for which Laud had died.

It is this Bill that binds every consecrated Church to the observance of the ritual of the Book of Common Prayer and no other, leaving no opening for individual omissions nor additions, and this has continued to be the rule of the Church ever since, only of late years slightly relaxed by permission to shorten matins and evensong on occasion.

The Puritan party were far from being gratified at the changes, though some had been made in deference to them, such as the insertion of the words 'militant here on earth,' because they thought that otherwise the prayer might be taken to include the dead; but they objected to the introduction of a few more holy days, such as that of St. Barnabas, which, by some inadvertence, had been omitted from the calendar of 1562, though the collect held its place. They naturally disliked the services of fasting and humiliation on the 30th of January, and of thanksgiving on the 29th of May. Indeed, while the loyal put on mourning, went to church and fasted rigorously on the anniversary of King Charles the Martyr's death, and two new churches were actually dedicated in his name as 'Our own, our royal Saint,' the Puritans made a point of dining on a calf's head in derision.

Another objection was to the prayer for the High Court of Parliament, because of the terming the King 'most religious.' In truth, this was an older prayer, apparently composed by Archbishop Laud in the time of James I., and the epithet originally meant according to rule, but it had drifted further and further from its old sense, and had so entirely come to be viewed as synonymous with pious, that there were unseemly jests on its being applied to Charles II., and it was thought to be from adulation, whereas the fact no doubt was that it could not have been altered without disrespect to the King, and a slur on the words of Laud, whom the Bishops regarded as a martyr.

The Earl of Northumberland presented a petition on behalf of the old Prayer-book, but without effect. The only alterations made in the House of Lords were that the incumbents of all parishes were required to have received Episcopal Ordination, and to abjure the Solemn League and Covenant, though if ejected, a fifth of the tithes were assigned for their maintenance, and the King was given a dispensing power for their retention, but the period at which they must choose between obedience to the Prayer-book or resignation of their benefices was shortened. The Commons had fixed at Michaelmas Day, which would have given the half year's tithe to the outgoing minister, the Lords advanced it to St. Bartholomew's. When the Bill was sent down again to the Commons, they refused both the allowance of fifths, and likewise the dispensing power, though, in a measure, it was allowed to the Ordinary; but they agreed with the Lords in requiring the Covenant to be denounced as an unlawful oath, and that there should be a declaration that, on no ground whatever, might arms be taken up against the King. Thus, on the 19th of May, 1662, the Act of Uniformity was passed, and received the assent of the King. It was, of course, the preservation of the Church of England, and the requirements therein were as absolutely necessary and stringent as the purification by Ezra after the restoration of the Jews; but like those, it fell very hard upon those who had transgressed.

The Presbyterian ministry, who occupied livings otherwise vacant, had only three months to consider what was to be done, and from some unavoidable delay in the printing, did not see the new Prayer-book till three weeks before the critical day.

Those who had been rightly ordained before the Rebellion were safe, provided they would conform, and denounce the Covenant; but those who had only been ordained by Presbyters could only continue on condition of receiving true Orders from the Bishops. Some could not endure the doctrine, others, while accepting the theology, stumbled at the ceremonies, and others held their Presbyterian Orders as a sacred thing, which could not be disregarded without sacrilege. There was much consultation and correspondence; Baxter, the chief leader among them, was for resignation, even of his lectureship, and so was Calamy. Many made up their minds that the sacrifice must be made for conscience' sake.

On the 17th of August these men preached farewell sermons to their flocks, and their pulpits were left vacant on what was known in their party as Black Bartholomew's Day. The number thus ejected is differently stated at 1800 and 2000, but these were the most zealous and uncompromising. The Bishops and patrons were not rigid in general. Some had time given them to prepare for full ordination; and in other cases, where the patron was a Puritan, the residence of the minister in the parsonage was permitted, a curate being employed to read prayers. There were bitter partings and much distress, but so far the needful changes, though sad, were wrought with fair consideration for the inevitable suffering they caused. Of course there were extreme cases. Sometimes a devoted Churchman and earnest pastor took the place of a rude, ignorant declaimer, while in the next parish a deeply-learned, pious, and diligent minister might be superseded by a careless priest, a mere boon companion or flatterer of the squire, incapable of preaching, and heedless of the flock. But there were many more middle cases; and in general the clergy of the Restoration were of a higher type than their predecessors, and the general spirit of the country was in their favour, feeling the Liturgy like an anchor after all the tossings of fanaticism. Of the ejected ministers, some became chaplains or tutors to Puritan families, and some kept school. Those who could conscientiously do so attended the Church services; and those who were grieved at neglect, or, as they considered, false doctrine on the part of the clergy, privately instructed and worshipped with such of their people as were attached to them.

The King intended this Act to be accepted in Scotland, for he had no feeling so strong as resentment against the Covenanters, who had begun the war, had turned the scale in England, betrayed his father, and what perhaps he felt most keenly of all, made him spend the most dismally uncomfortable year of his life.

The first step had been the Assembly of the Estates of Parliament,

on the first day of 1661, when the Regalia, dug up from their hiding-place in Kinneff Church, were produced and carried in state; and then, in the spirit of reaction, an Act Rescissory was passed, cancelling everything that had been done in the Scottish Parliament since 1640. This had left the field clear, and as soon as the Act of Uniformity had been passed, several nobles, and the two ministers, Sharp and Douglas, were summoned to London to confer with the King.

Whether Sharp was honestly convinced, or whether he yielded out of ambition, none can tell; but the nobles soon saw how the land lay. A Privy Council was held, in which it was resolved to restore Episcopacy in Scotland, with only one dissentient voice, that of the Earl of Lauderdale, who, with the sagacity of the Maitlands, knew that such a matter was more easily said than done. The English people connected the Bishops' book with 'the good old times,' before the days of war and confusion; the Scots only viewed them as a badge of English oppression, and the first step towards Popery.

Lauderdale himself, on coming out from the Council, met Sharp walking with the Earl of Stirling, and thus announced what had passed: 'Mr. Sharp, Bishops you are to have in Scotland. You are to be Archbishop of St. Andrews; but whoever shall be the man, I will smite him under the fifth rib.'

Sharp was commissioned to persuade his colleague Douglas to accept preferment, and this acceptance was thought probable, as he listened willingly to the Episcopal ministers, and communicated with them. His answer was, however: 'Brother, I render his Majesty a thousand thanks; but I have dipt so far in oaths, and in the concerns of the late troubles, and particularly in my sermon before the King at his coronation; and being now turned aged and infirm, I want strength to sustain the weight of the office, and the difficulties I should have to encounter. But if you can comply, who are young, and not under the same engagements, I neither can nor will blame you.'

All the old Scottish Bishops were dead except Sysderf of Galloway, who was too old to officiate; so that a mandate was issued by the Bishops of London and Winchester to consecrate four Scottish clergy, Sharp, Fairfowl, Hamilton, and Leighton to the sees of St. Andrews, Glasgow, Galloway, and Dumblane. These were first raised to the priesthood and then duly consecrated by these two, with the assistance of other prelates; and on their return they filled up the other ten sees, Montrose's chaplain, Wishart being placed at Edinburgh, and Sydserf translated to the Orkneys. The incomes of all these dioceses together did not amount to that of Winchester. Nothing as yet was said about the liturgy, and things remained as in the latter days of James, so that there was no surplice, no kneeling at the Holy Communion, no crossing after Baptism, and Calamy exclaimed, 'What would our brethren in Scotland be at, or what would they have? Would to Heaven we had had these offers.'

No Episcopal Ordination was enforced on the existing ministers as

in England, but as they had mostly been elected by the parish, instead of being presented by the patrons, it was enacted that they should not remain in possession unless they obtained proper presentation from the patron, backed by the Bishop. To the strict Presbyterian mind 'a harmonious call' from the flock was a sacred thing, and to accept the nomination of an authority seemed sacrilege; and a number of parishes disregarded the order.

On this, on the 1st of October, 1662, a Parliament sitting at Glasgow, no doubt chiefly composed of lairds who were patrons, enacted that every minister who did not comply before the 1st of November, should be ejected from his manse. This meeting is known by the title of the Drunken Parliament, for the people of Glasgow affirmed that every man in it was intoxicated, excepting Lockhart of Lee, who declared that the Ordinance would lay the country desolate. The accusation was not unlikely to be in the main true, for hard drinking was scarcely accounted a vice.

Archbishop Sharp had been much against this hasty measure, well knowing how cautiously the people needed to be dealt with; and the effect was that, after the example of the English ministers on Black Bartholomew's Day, though for less causes, 200 ministers, at the least computation, 350 at the largest, all quitted their kirks at once, so that by the end of the year 1662, England and Scotland were in the same condition, with an authorised minister in many churches, and an unauthorised minister outside; but with this difference, that in England such cases were comparatively unfrequent, and the minority adhered to the ousted pastor; in Lowland Scotland it was the rule, and the greater number held to their old ministers instead of to the young men fresh from the University and episcopally ordained.

Something of the same kind was going on it England, and there were continual complaints from the clergy and committals by the magistrates. There were at one time 190 in prison, and Colonel Hutchinson was one of the persons imprisoned under this Act. He was arrested in his own house, while expounding the Epistle to the Romans, and died in confinement. He owes most of his fame to the loving memoir of him, written by his wife.

Charles, who hated severity and wanted money, tried to get an Act passed permitting Nonconformists to purchase dispensations for the exercise of their religion. The measure was brought forward in the House of Lords; but the Bishops justly considering it unworthy, procured its defeat, and for this the King never quite forgave them.

A still more severe Act followed in 1665, forbidding any Nonconformist minister to come within five miles of any place where he had been pastor, under pain of being imprisoned for six months, nor might they act as domestic chaplains, tutors, or schoolmasters, or unless they took an oath condemning all war against the King, and all alteration in Church or State.

Those who could bring themselves to take this oath were better

off than before; but it fell very hard on those who would not, banishing them from their old homes, and depriving them of the maintenance; and at one time or other, almost all the more distinguished Nonconformists underwent the sentence of imprisonment. It was the measure which had been dealt to the Church, but that did not make it less harsh, or more in the spirit of the Christian faith.

Charles put forth a declaration promising indulgence to tender consciences, and assuring those who lived peaceably, that he would move Parliament to pass some Act that would 'enable us to exercise the power of dispensing which we believe to be inherent in us.'

This declaration greatly displeased Parliament, who thought that it was intended to be the means of encouraging Popery, and that it would lead to schism and encourage sects. The King was obliged to give up his plan; and at the same time the clergy sent up a petition for several laws against the Anabaptists, and for an increase of the fine for not going to church.

The Commons passed in 1664 the first Conventicle Act, fining and imprisoning every person above sixteen years old who should be present at any act of religion unauthorised by the English Church, if there were five persons present besides the numbers of the household. If the offence were committed a third time, it was visited with banishment to the American plantations, and the execution of the law was placed in the hands of the Justices of the Peace, often rude illiterate squires, quite unfit to deal with matters of conscience, and with ministers far more educated as well as thoughtful than themselves. The Quakers, who would not go to church because they did not consider that only the faithful met there, suffered heavily under this Act.

SHORT ESSAYS.

BY ELIZABETH M. SEWELL.

ESSAY II.

AGNOSTICISM.

IMMORTALITY! how quietly some persons in the present day put the thought aside. That is one of the states of mind which I can never understand. I think I could more easily accept the creed of Materialism, and make Death the end of all, than the no-creed of Agnosticism, which says, 'I will not trouble myself about it.' For after all Death is real, not thinking about it does not make it less real. Materialists have sight on their side. If 'seeing is believing,' Death must be the end of all; and as it comes to us as naturally as sleep, the majority of mankind, it might be thought, would welcome it. Why do they not? What is it which makes the untutored Indian talk of the spirit-land and the happy hunting-grounds? I have often wondered at it. Death, when it comes before one, is such an absolute negation of life. Silent, motionless, even decaying,—we gaze on the form we loved, and as we gaze we weep, and then we bury the body in the ground, and speak of the terrible blank, the utter desolation of our existence; and yet, all the time, the doubt of Death haunts us. We do not believe in its destruction as extinction. Even Materialists speak hesitatingly about its power; whilst Agnostics calmly decline to discuss it. I believe myself that nothing can ever make mankind accept it as an end. I believe that the instinct of Immortality has been implanted in us by God, like other instincts, to neutralise the influence of sight. 'Seeing is not believing' in this case. The traditions and superstitions of the human race are against it, and putting aside all other testimony, this alone would always be an insuperable obstacle to my own acceptance of Death as a final end.

But if it is not an end, then it must be a continuation; not merely a new beginning, for that would involve the extinction of consciousness and memory. The teaching of Buddhism, indeed, recognises consecutive stages of existence, in which past acts tell upon the condition of the soul in a subsequent state, whilst the individual who thus passes from one state to another is not supposed to be aware of the transition. But his life, in this new period of existence, in whatever stage it may be—whether higher or lower than that which

has gone before—must be to him a new beginning. To his own consciousness he has had no previous existence; and the idea of consecutive conditions of Being, so intimately connected that they form but one life, and yet each condition, having a separate and distinct consciousness, is surely unthinkable.

I leave it, therefore, for we are not called upon to dwell upon that which is unthinkable. Continuation of life to me involves continuation of that which makes us recognise or be conscious of our own identity, and this recognition appears to be inseparably dependent upon memory.

If this be so, then, independent of all questions of sin, its punishment, or its pardon, the possibility of a future existence must be of importance. For with memory we must carry with us, when we enter upon another world, the materials for enjoyment, or for suffering, which we have gathered in this world. That is the very lowest idea of the connection between the two worlds. When we add to this the supposition of our happiness and misery, Hereafter, depending upon our actions Here, it seems to me little less than insanity to put aside the inquiry into our prospect of immortality as one in which we are not at present interested.

A long time ago I remember reading the Abbé Huc's travels in China. He describes a conversation which he had with a Chinaman who was thoroughly impressed—so at least the man declared—with the truth of Christianity, but who resolutely refused to be baptized. The Abbé remonstrated with him, and asked the reason of his refusal. 'You will allow,' said the Chinaman, 'that we human beings are made up of body and soul, and you must also allow that we cannot attend to two things at a time. Now, whilst we are in this life, the body is all-important to us; if we neglect it, we shall die; therefore, I give my full attention to my body now; when I get into another world then will be the time to think of the soul.'

The Chinaman's argument was convincing in his own eyes. He was an Agnostic; but whether Chinese logic is the highest form of human reason, is at least doubtful.

For myself I rest with greater confidence upon the words of a French philosopher, whose name I imagine must be received with some respect, even in these days of enlightenment and discovery. I refer to Blaise Pascal. He says, 'L'immortalité de l'âme est une chose qui nous importe si fort, et qui nous touche si profondément, qu'il faut avoir perdu tout sentiment pour être dans l'indifférence de savoir ce qui en est. Toutes nos actions et toutes nos pensées doivent prendre des routes si différentes, selon qu'il y aura des biens éternels à espérer, ou non, qu'il est impossible de faire une démarche avec sens et jugement qu'en la réglant par la vue de ce point, qui doit être notre premier objet.

'Ainsi notre premier intérêt et notre premier devoir est de nous éclaircir sur ce sujet, d'où dépend toute notre conduite. . . . Je ne

puis avoir que de la compassion pour ceux qui gémissent sincèrement dans ce doute, qui le regardent comme le dernier des malheurs, et qui, n'épargnant rien pour en sortir, font de cette recherche leur principale et leur plus sérieuse occupation. Mais pour ceux qui passent leur vie sans penser à cette dernière fin de la vie, et qui, par cette seule raison qu'ils ne trouvent pas en eux-mêmes des lumières qui les persuadent, négligent d'en chercher ailleurs, et d'examiner à fond si cette opinion est de celles que le peuple reçoit par une simplicité crédule, ou de celles qui, quoique obscures d'elles-mêmes ont néanmoins un fondement très solide; je le considère d'une manière toute différente. Cette négligence en une affaire où il s'agit d'eux-mêmes, de leur éternité, de leur tout, m'irrite plus qu'elle ne m'attendrit; elle m'étonne et m'épouvante; c'est un monstre pour moi.

'Je ne dis pas ceci par le zèle pieux d'une dévotion spirituelle. Je prétends, au contraire, que l'amour propre, que l'intérêt humain, que la plus simple lumière de la raison doit nous donner de ces sentiments. Il ne faut voir, pour cela, que ce que voient les personnes les moins éclairées.'*

There can scarcely be words stronger than these. Pascal, indeed, goes on to argue, that as heaven cannot be intended for those who doubt their souls' immortality, there is no choice left them but annihilation or hell. This will not be accepted in the present day. Philosophers have learnt to do without heaven, and they utterly reject the idea of hell. They take it for granted that if there is a God and a future state, all must necessarily be well with them in that state, whether or not they think about it now, and I have no wish to contest the point; but when it comes to accepting their teaching myself, and acting upon it, I must of course use my own judgment, as they use theirs. And the first doubt which suggests itself to me comes in the form of what may appear a very low selfish question: Is it safe (as the expression is) *to chance* happiness in another world?

Suppose—merely as a possibility—that we are to live on for ever. Suppose there is a God, who is a Personal Being, a Moral Governor, and who has ordained that our happiness in that future life shall depend upon our recognition of Him in this life, is it really safe to put aside now without inquiry the probability of His existence, His worship, His laws, and the necessity of our obedience to them?

I find people, in their writings or their conversation, arguing, that although these things may possibly be true, they are *non-proven*, and can never be *proven* in the sense of demonstration, and therefore it is better not to disturb the mind by considering them.

But I fail to see how such questions can be quietly left. It does not appear—so far as my observation goes—that the same line of argument is adopted as reasonable in other cases. No doubt there are curious inquiries which we feel to be beyond the reach of our intellect, about which we are contented not to trouble ourselves; but

* 'Pensées de Pascal,' 2nde partie, art. ii.

then they do not personally affect us, except that they are intellectually interesting. The moment any disputed point touches our affections, our fortunes, or our well-being here, we never rest till we have decided it, so far as regards probability; and then, if we have any common sense, we act upon our decision. The man who says he knows that he is dying, that he has been told of a medicine which may restore him, but as it is impossible to be quite certain about it, he will not make inquiry concerning it, is considered a weak fool.

This at least is how the matter strikes me. To *chance* (if one may so say) the existence of God and the awful facts of Immortality, Judgment, and Salvation, appears to me simple folly. I must make up my mind to accept or deny them as motives of action, if I am to be contented and happy. Absolute scientific demonstration is indeed unattainable. We cannot know personally that there is another life after this, until we have entered upon it; but the existence of a Personal God, which makes immortality so vitally important, is a question not so entirely beyond our experience, and it is one which every reasoning being is surely bound to consider with the utmost earnestness of purpose that he can command.

The 'if' is such a tremendous 'if.' The probability involves such unspeakably awful consequences. Who and what are we that we should dare to treat it as a matter which may be left undecided? For it is not as if we were presented with a blank page on which we are free to inscribe whatever may suggest itself to our feeble intellect. There are certain facts, perfectly undeniable, which meet us at the outset of our examination, and cannot be put aside. The universal belief of mankind, and the mysterious adaptations of nature, commonly known as Design, must be received as some evidence of the existence of a Divine mind. Apart from all other considerations, they constitute a probability which surely lays the burden of proof upon the Atheist, and calls upon him to disprove, absolutely and conclusively, the Being of a Personal God. If he cannot do so, then on the lowest ground of human wisdom, he is bound to order his life according to what he has reason to consider the Laws of that God.

And thus arise the great questions connected with definite religious beliefs of some kind. May they also be left? If they profess to be God's truths, may we live without inquiring into them. I am not attempting now to decide which of the various creeds of mankind is true. I am only arguing that to put them aside is unreasonable.

Even if there be only the lowest degree of probability that one religion is more true than another, we must be called upon to act upon that probability. If we cannot pray the Christian's prayer, because our minds are not fully convinced, we can at least pray hypothetically—'O God—if there be a God—help me! O Saviour—if there be a Saviour—have pity on me! O Spirit of Truth—if there be a Holy Spirit—enlighten me!'

It is the temper of mind which calmly overlooks probabilities that so surprises me—not that which is perplexed, yet inquires, and strives to do what seems most likely to be right, however uncertain the right may be.

I sometimes have tried to imagine in my own mind the kind of excuse which the moral, kind-hearted, philosophical Agnostic might make when summoned to the Presence of God.

I suppose it would be very much what the Chinaman made to the Abbé Huc. 'Life,' he might say, 'was all-important, its interests were absorbing. I found that men might be benevolent and just upon grounds of expediency and humanity; and benevolence and justice being the chief virtues essential for the support of the morality necessary for human happiness, there was no need to trouble myself about religion, and therefore I left it.' This argument, it must be remembered, is based on the assumption that morality has no claim upon us, except so far as it conduces to what we deem happiness; whereas, in its highest sense, morality includes the duties arising from the various relations in which thinking beings are placed towards each other; and in this sense our relation to the Eternal God, whom Christians regard as Father, Saviour, and Sanctifier, is, upon the supposition of His existence, as much a part of morality as the duties involved in the relations of father and child, or of brother and sister. But putting aside this consideration, the excuse may to some sound reasonable.

The only awkward doubt is—will it be received? As I said before, if there were no such thing as religion in the world, if no one had ever heard of a God, if it were quite a new idea that there was such a Being, there might be some force in it, though even then the abstract argument for such a mighty fact would surely demand consideration. But looking at the case as it stands, it does appear perfectly unaccountable that men and women, clever and sensible in other respects, should be able to persuade themselves that such reasoning can, with the slightest degree of probability, be accepted.

God forbid that I should venture to judge and condemn. 'To his own master' each man must stand or fall. But the case presses upon my mind more and more strongly the longer I live, and the greater evidence I have, that there are hundreds, probably thousands, of persons at the present day who are contenting themselves with Agnosticism as a refuge—so they look upon it—from Atheism.

I would say earnestly to young persons, use your intellect, and judge by the rules of common sense. Is it wise, can it be quite safe, to put aside, on the plea of *non-proven*, what the vast majority of mankind have always accepted? Does it satisfy you to do so? Are you *quite* sure that when you come to the verge of Death you will have no misgivings?

It is one thing to say that we have honestly examined, and have been convinced by sound and indisputable reasoning, that the

existence of a Personal God, and the fact of man's responsibility to Him, are delusions of the human brain; it is quite another thing to say that we felt sure beforehand there was no sufficient evidence, and therefore we did not trouble ourselves to inquire into it. Not to inquire, is practically to reject. So strange it is to see how persons can accept, where religion and duty are concerned, pleas and arguments which they would laugh at if produced in other cases!

Which of us would allow a servant to bring forward as an excuse for a neglect or omission, 'I heard others say that such or such an order had been given; but I was sure they could not be certain about it, and therefore I made no inquiry.' And yet this is the kind of excuse for the neglect of religion which Agnostics will have to bring before God, if there is a God, and if,—as mankind somehow obstinately persist in thinking probable,—we are one day to stand before His Judgment-seat.

It is all easy enough now, I dare say. There are people who seem to be quite happy in their conclusions, and others gather round them, and if they have misgivings, find support and forgetfulness in the fact of increasing numbers. And their principles are on the surface, not only simple and humble, but tolerant and benevolent. 'We don't reject religion—oh, no! we respect and admire it so far as it contributes to morality. It would indeed be presumptuous in us to condemn it, for no doubt in past ages it has been of great use, and even now it must be upheld as a kind of police force which overawes the ignorant; but accepting it for oneself is quite a different matter. We can accept nothing without scientific demonstration.'

This language is all very well now. The majority of those who are filling the ranks of Agnosticism are comparatively young, or if not young, they are immersed in the interests of a world which offers employment and attraction of an absorbing character; but there is such a thing as growing old, as being able to say, if I live ten years longer I shall be looked upon as quite superannuated, and if I live only five I must expect to be comparatively weak and helpless, and if my name were to appear in the first column of the 'Times' to-morrow, people would only say: 'Miss So-and-so is dead, I should not have thought she was quite so old, but I see she was seventy,' and then they would turn to another subject, and Miss So-and-so's death would be accepted as quite natural, an event which no one could wonder at. How does life on earth look when one has reached that age of seventy?

The far-off past is very dreamy, almost phantom-like. The near future looks—what shall I say?—very blank? very dark? That depends on the view we take of it. If there is an impenetrable wall before one, blocking it up, I candidly own it is *very* dark. Sometimes I try to bring it before me, as Miss Martineau is said to have done when, blind and deaf, she sat waiting for annihilation. But my mind

as absolutely refuses to contemplate what is meant by annihilation, as what is meant by nothing. Everything seems against it, instinct, reason, historical tradition. A friend of mine was once asked when a girl what *nothing* was, and she answered, 'something black.' That is the nearest idea I can form of annihilation, and I cannot reconcile myself to it. I suppose there are persons who can. Of one thing I am tolerably sure, it is only by turning aside from it. They start with the determination to accept only that which can be demonstrated, and the fact of death, the one thing above all others, which so far as sight goes is open to demonstration, they refuse to look at.

'There may be another world—or there may not be—who can tell? Therefore put the question aside.' Such seems to me a fair statement of the Agnostic principles. But at seventy the principle fails to give support. One must then look at Death. It stares one in the face. It meets one at every turn. And the human instinct revolts from annihilation. There are as 'obstinate questionings' connected with the end as with the beginning of life, and though Agnosticism will not recognise them, yet we old people must. The opiates of business, and pleasure, and affection, are ceasing to have any absorbing power over us. With the possibility of Immortality, the words 'it may or it may not be' can no longer be accepted. We demand, we cannot help demanding, a well-grounded conviction one way or the other. If we are *absolutely certain* that with death we cease to be—well and good; the question which will then naturally arise, must be, is it worth while to live any longer? and this will be answered by each individual according to his circumstances. But if we are not certain, if there is any doubt, even if it only amount to possibility, much more if there is anything which may be called probability, then in obedience to the highest reason and the calmest common sense, there must not be a moment lost in searching fully into the matter, and acting, as in every other case of probability, in accordance with the dictates of prudence. There are those who say that the happiness of Eternity is at stake. We may laugh at them, but they still repeat it, and we cannot stop them, and we do not like to hear them say it. Suppose—only suppose they may be right!

'OUR YOUNGEST.'

BY AN ELDER SISTER.

'A thought lay like a flower upon my heart.'

FEW would care to prefix, as the motto of a happy life, Gertrude de Lagaraye's words: 'Crooked and sick for ever! Crooked and sick!' Yet of the career before us, of a deformed woman, quiet and unobtrusive, often physically suffering, happiness was the prevailing characteristic.

Adela Dundas was born in Edinburgh on St. Matthias' Day, 1840, the youngest of five daughters. She seemed destined to be her parents' comforter, replacing an infant sister who had died a year before. Up to three years old, nothing could be prettier in face and form than this little maiden. She, and a brother two years younger, the last, and therefore by birthright the family pets and playthings, were, with their deep blue eyes and sunny curls, as pretty a baby-picture as could be desired. But there came a damp summer afternoon, a cold, scarcely noticed, but developing into inflammation of the lungs, and after a year of intense suffering, the little girl rose from her sick-bed, hopelessly deformed, one lung destroyed, and a curvature of the spine, distorting and crippling for ever the tender little frame. It was during the long convalescence of this illness that parents, doctor, nurses, friends, observed the singularly charming disposition of the baby-invalid. Never resisting, even though writhing and sobbing under painful surgical treatment—and chloroform was then unknown—she got up her spirits at every intermission of pain, and responded to each endeavour to please and amuse her, by pictures, stories, songs, etc. Submission to the inevitable was the key-note of Adela's life, and with her powers of mind, and strong native common sense, it is probable that under any circumstances she would have made the best of what could not be avoided. Thanks be to God, that in the training of a Christian home, His baptized child learnt to see in 'the inevitable' a merciful heavenly Father, and to know that in simple acceptance of His Will, her crippled life need not be a sad, useless, unprofitable thing.

As she got stronger, my first very vivid recollection is of her intense love of animals. As a great part of our life, including all her childhood, was spent in the country, it was possible to gratify her insatiable desire for pets. Her dogs were in endless succession, Skye terriers the best loved; then kittens, bantams and doves, donkeys and ponies, rabbits, sundry owls bestowed by friendly gamekeepers, and at one time a jackdaw, as insolent and thievish a specimen of his

tribe as could well be found. Nothing was safe from him—my dear father's toilet accessories, the maids' thimbles and Sunday brooches, the butler's tea-spoons—no Fenian head-centre could be more regardless of the rights of property than Watty. A dear cousin, who often stayed with us, suggested that as most of us were musical, we might have a domestic performance of the 'Gazza Ladra,' with Watty's assistance. I must give an anecdote, characteristic of the child. Searching once in vain for her troublesome pet, she observed Moidart, the beautiful Skye, worrying what turned out to be a bird's head. Convinced that the puppy had avenged the public wrongs upon Watty, and anxious for his own education, she took a riding-whip and soundly thrashed him, giving herself the worse pain of the two. Like a well-bred pup, he endured the lash in silence, save for the eloquence of his Cairn-gorm hued eyes. She had barely finished when a loud 'sqwawk' was heard in the passage. On opening the door, there sat Watty, winking and wicked as ever. Of course, Moidart was in her arms directly, showing, as only a dear dog can, his delight in his full exculpation; but she had plenty of brother-and-sister wit to endure about 'poor Gelert's dying yell,' over which poem she had cried many a time. In vain the household protested against Watty's larcenies, great and small, insisting on banishment or even severer legal proceedings; he kept his hold on his little mistress's heart till he came to the favourite's proverbial bad end, I really forget how. Not wholly unwept, unhonoured, and unsung, she and her little brother made attempts at an elegy in the Cock-Robin style, 'Who killed poor Watty?' Some years after, she preferred 'Barnaby Rudge' to Dickens' other stories, declaring that in Grip the raven, his wit and wickedness, was the only parallel to her dear Watty.

Adela's love for and sympathy with animal life, was, however, no mere childish fondness for pets. One of her strongest characteristics from her earliest years, was her love and reverence for God's visible creation, and it extended over scenery, flowers, and the whole world of dumb creatures. The first time she was taken to church, her nurse asked on her return if she could recollect anything she had heard.

'O yes! the clergyman says a good man loves his beast!'

We remembered that Prov. xii. 10 had been read in the Daily Lesson. No one who knew Edinburgh a few years ago will be surprised at her great mutual friendship with Dr. John Brown, author of 'Rab and his friends.' Any one who appreciated animals won her heart. I do not think she would ever have made a friend of any one who wantonly or carelessly misused a dumb creature. Many years later in our lives, she was holding my arm in the Edinburgh Exhibition Gallery, while we hung entranced over Sir Noel Paton's weird but beautiful 'Nickar the Soul-less.'

'It positively pains one,' she said, 'as if one saw an animal cruelly treated.'

We further discussed the legend in its many forms, and she said: 'It may be heterodox, but in place of that old belief in elemental creatures longing for souls, I am inclined to put animals; I believe love of a human being gives them souls.'

I replied:

'. . . As if the ocean and the sky
Within him had lit up and nursed
A soul God gave him not at first
To comprehend their majesty.'

'Yes,' she said, 'something like that; I like to cultivate friendship with an animal,' and turning again to the tear-stained face in the picture, 'I could no more have been cruel to you, poor Nickar, than to my dear dog! I hope the abbot penanced that monk well!'

Her education was desultory, of course. She never was fit for regular schoolroom routine, and might do her lessons lying down, sitting on her governess' lap, or any way she pleased. But she had the inborn love of books which is in itself an education, and among other mental powers, one of the best verbal memories I ever knew. Children in my day learnt by rote far more than they do at present, and with such a capacity as Adela's, the resource and pleasure of her well-stocked memory lasted for life. She knew the Psalter by heart at nine years old, besides quantities of poetry sacred and secular, and even as a little child, her aptness in quotation used to amuse us greatly. To save fatigue, she learnt neither music nor drawing regularly, though I feel sure she would have excelled in both. Her ear was correct, and her pleasure in good music very great. If we were at a concert together, she would ask me to sit by her and 'explain the music.' She had an excellent eye for colour, which was shown in her dress, in her taste in pictures, and especially in her appreciation of Nature's colouring. I know she might have been a good artist, from the way in which she selected the points of view she wanted one to sketch for her, and no effect of storm or sunshine was lost upon her quick eye. I always wished she might draw; but it was not till she was grown up, and could not be made more or less crooked, that she was allowed even to write much, she learnt in fact with her left hand. But as years brought us all to the equality of womanhood, it was delightful to M. and myself—her two next eldest sisters—to find in our dear 'youngest princess' one far beyond the average in acquirements; while by steady reading and perseverance in her pursuits, her mental store gathered year by year. She was a good French and German scholar, and learnt a little Italian and Latin.

Our mother used laughingly to say, that if Sir Walter Scott had written only for the delight of her children, he would not have written in vain. Although it is difficult to name her favourite author—she had so many—Sir Walter was certainly her earliest love. His prose and poetry, border minstrelsy and ballads, she really knew

by heart, with every note and historical comment, and Lockhart's Life to crown the whole. Perhaps her love for him received fresh stimulus from his life-long friendship with former generations of her own family, and from one of our many homes having been in the beautiful Border country, in the neighbourhood of Abbotsford. But she laughed at the modern pedantry which depreciates him, declaring that people who neglected Scott's works had a mental vacuum nothing else could supply. Shakespeare was quite as familiar, and as to the other standard English poets young people seem to find unreadable nowadays, Adela not only read, she knew them in a way few modern girls do. Often when I have pointed out to her with pleasure some beautiful passage I was reading, I found she knew it already better than I did. Tennyson was certainly her favourite living poet, each fresh publication of his was hailed with delight, and all but learnt by heart, by our 'Tennysonian,' as some friends called her. How we used to enjoy getting her into a discussion of his merits with a dear friend of great talent and taste, owning himself too old-fashioned to understand these 'new lights,' and drawing her out by reading bits in a mock-heroic and ludicrous style!

When the question of her going into society really had to be faced and settled, it was to me a great evidence of my sister's mental superiority how quietly and practically she settled it herself, taking the position she meant to hold for life. She never grew beyond the height of ten years old, but had good health, was able to walk and ride, besides being an excellent traveller. At twenty, with her expressive countenance, limpid complexion, eyes the colour of her favourite wild blue-bell, and sunny hair, few could look unmoved on the sweet face, accompanied by the hopelessly-crippled figure. Some would have urged keeping her secluded, for fear of shocks to the sensitiveness common to the deformed. They little knew her strength of character. She was aware of her condition, knew its life-long privations, and that she must take the world as she found it, not always sympathetic, nor in its sympathy always well-bred. But looking on society as a duty as well as a pleasure, she faced all disagreeables at once. With good sense and tact she avoided awkward situations, never claimed help or notice, and was soon as easy and happy abroad as at home, welcome everywhere, and forming valuable life-friendships, which to a nature gifted like hers, constituted a large part of her usefulness and happiness. Never exacting sympathy she excelled in the giving of it; reminding one of the luminous crosses which take in God's sunshine, to pour it forth in darkened hours. Many have said, since her death, 'Well, it was long before I observed she was deformed, I could look at nothing but that face!' and 'I could not talk to her for five minutes, without forgetting all but her conversation.' 'A man's brain, and a woman's heart, but cased in the form of a delicate child. No wonder the blade cut through its fragile sheath.'

Our country homes were various, often in beautiful districts;

though our father's official duties kept him within railway access of Edinburgh. Adela's delight in scenery was not merely love of the beautiful, the way she caught its undertone and spirit was remarkable. Wherever we went, she got up the local history, legends, songs, and of course, any Waverley Novel connected with the place. She was the most delightful travelling companion, and if she was not of the party, the next best thing was to write to her and get her charming replies, full of witty comments on the adventures. She and I once paid a long visit to relations in Sutherlandshire, where railroads had not then reached. Her delight was intense at the amount of folk-lore and legend still lingering in that wild and beautiful region. By blue fiords of sea, on golden sands, in rolling fir-woods, on breezy moorlands, with the Assynt mountains in the distance, there were tales of second-sight, wraiths, apparitions; every loch was tenanted by its Vuagh or water-spirit, and the moors were haunted by a phantom horse, that lured the unwary on to his back, and sank in a peat-moss with them. 'To find a real live superstition!' she exclaimed, when I was turned off a grey stone on the shore of Loch Migdal, where I was sketching; because the Vuagh did not approve of such a use of her favourite seat. Years afterwards, M. and I were at Killin, and wrote to her of our scrambles, and of our having discovered, on ascending Meal-nan-Ptarmachan, a wild tiny lake, which we hoped to visit and bring her a sketch of—the 'Lake of the Water-Bull.' 'Go and see it by all means,' she wrote, 'and sketch it; but don't exasperate the bull. Do you remember Loch Migdal? The bull must be worse than vuaghs and wild horses all together.' We spent a pleasant time once at the English lakes, and she thought them as beautiful in their own style as the Highlands. Nevertheless, she utterly deplored their lack of legends. 'Such rocks! such tarns! and not a single fairy to be heard of! What's the use of scenery to such stupid people?' We were sitting by the tarn at the top of the Sty Head Pass, our ponies resting, I sketching at her request. 'In the Highlands, this place would be bristling with legends. I must go and poke about at the water's edge and see if I can find a kelpie,' she said.

'Keep him quiet till I have finished drawing,' I replied.

She was better satisfied with the Vale of St. John and Gyneth's Castle; but declared that they were indebted to Sir Walter Scott for telling their beautiful story. She delighted in flowers, and would talk to me about their faces. She maintained they had a physiognomy, to which I quite agreed. On summer visits, before settling down to business or letters, she liked a stroll after breakfast among flower-beds and greenhouses. 'Just to get my button-hole,' and a bit of heliotrope or sweet verbena with a single carnation, a rosebud or geranium would be stuck in her dress for the morning. 'Now just sit in the shade a few minutes and let us make out what the birds are saying.' She never would connect anything evil with a flower.

Sitting near a brilliant bed of tulips, she said to a friend, who remarked they looked proud and stiff: 'Oh, no, not so stiff as lilies; and why proud? God has painted them so exquisitely, they like to hold up their heads to show us His work.' She was very fond of Mrs. Gaskell's novels, and declared that reading her descriptions had the same effect on one's mind as the pure fresh scent of spring-flowers. I have often thought, on looking at her—as she watched the sunset or revelled in woods and flowers—'Who talketh with thee, Adeline?'—the spirit emanating from herself, as Coleridge says,* seemed to respond to all beautiful visible things and draw forth their spiritual meanings. 'The strain upraise of joy and praise,' was one of her favourite hymns.

Some few years after our father became Registrar-General, we fixed our home in Edinburgh, making excursions in the summer—some of them abroad. Foreign travel was a new delight to her, and her letters a real treat. 'The Alps are more than all that you said,' she wrote to me from Milan, after crossing the Simplon and seeing the Lakes. 'I do not know whether mountains or "towered cities" please me most. I know it is wrong to admire bad Gothic; but when the white marble flashes in the evening light, I keep repeating:

"Think ye the spires that glow so bright,
In front of yonder setting sun, etc.'"

In 1871, on my way with some friends from Italy to the Passion-Play (interrupted in the previous year by the war), we spent a fortnight among the Adamello Alps. I wrote to her that beautiful as the sunsets were, I thought the dawn more unearthly, when the daffodil light first touched the highest snows. 'I understand that,' she wrote; 'it must be like the Transfiguration, and the garments such as no fuller on earth can white them.' I kept a minute journal for her and M., and they delighted in the account of the Passion-Play. In 1880, Adela was there herself with her eldest sister. Our town life gave her still more general intercourse with others. We became members of the Shakespeare Club and of the Ladies' Debating Society, where she was soon in great request as a reader and speaker. In summer, when meetings were small, it was sometimes proposed that each one present should describe her favourite picture or read her favourite short poem. She once selected A. Clough's 'Qua Cursum Ventus,' new to the listeners, some of whom have told me they could never forget the poem or the reader. I used to wish she would write at this time; but she answered quaintly: 'Books enough in the world, we want folks to read them.'

I must say a few words of her special Church-work. She was the first Secretary to the first Churchwomen's Association for Foreign Missions in our Scottish Church, and co-editor of the 'Mission

* Ode to Dejection.

Chronicle.' But this, her best-known work, was only for the last eleven years of her life; she was a Church-worker from her childhood. Whenever our wandering life permitted it, we took up any Church-work to be had in our neighbourhood; and in remote places assembled children from cottages nearest us for Scripture-classes and week-day teaching—in all this and in cottage-visiting she excelled. In Edinburgh, of course, work was easily accessible for us all. One of the best worked Missions of the Cathedral at this day was begun by herself and M., with a cousin and a few volunteers; quietly and steadily keeping a little Sunday-school and Mothers' Meeting in a hitherto uncared-for district. Other work grew around this; we used laughingly to call her and M. 'the press-gang,' from the number of rough lads they got on board the training-ship at Dundee. A legal friend of eminence, after helping her in the necessary forms for getting a boy into a reformatory, said: 'Of all women I ever knew, she is the best for knowing exactly what she wants, and setting about it in the proper way.'

When our late revered Bishop Cotterill came to us in 1871, it was to be expected that he would stir up Foreign Mission work. Desultory efforts had been made and individuals interested: e.g. Bishop Charles Mackenzie and his sisters went forth from us to the mission-field; but no associated effort had been attempted by our Church. We had ourselves been interested in the Bishopric of British Columbia from its first foundation, our eldest brother having been Bishop Hill's first chaplain for some years. From loving sympathy in his work Adela went on to improve her knowledge of the whole subject. Above all else, she was a devoted Scottish Churchwoman, and the similar position and trials of Mission and Colonial Churches to those of our own beloved Church of the north interested her greatly. Bishop Cotterill found in her a worker after his own heart. When in 1875 he spoke to me of his fear lest the Secretary and Editorship combined should be too much for the fragile little thing, I could assure him that everything she undertook would be thoroughly well done. From the time of her appointment to this definite work for Christ, Adela's life took a new flight heavenwards. She truly lived for it, and one could see that it was a centre-point for her aspirations, energies, and prayers. It was our Gertrude de Lagaraye finding her life-work! All who worked or corresponded with her found in her an enthusiasm which some might call visionary, balanced by practical common sense and mastery of every detail. It was the work of a thoroughly well-cultured and disciplined mind, and of a large and loving heart.

Her bodily strength declined gradually, and in 1883 our dear father went to his rest. From this time she had more of an invalid look, and her lameness increased; but she could still enjoy easy journeys, and was as bright in conversation and writing as before. Her beloved friend, Bishop Cotterill, was called home in 1886, and

after his death she certainly grew weaker. Her last great pleasure was in the visit of the Archdeacon of Kaffraria to Scotland; the packing of a travelling Communion-bag, as a gift on his departure from England, was the last 'mission work' done by her own hands. She was present at the annual Service of the Association in the Cathedral on March 24th, and enjoyed it much, in spite of great fatigue. On Easter Day, the Cathedral Evensong was her last act of worship in God's House. On Saturday, April 23, in considerable pain, she spent some hours with her friend and co-editor in business arrangements, wishing to put her work in order, she said. But there was no word spoken of death, she rather believed that protracted suffering would entirely lay her aside. On wishing her good-night, her mother said: 'I have all day been praying that God would lay on you no more than He will enable you to bear.' The blue eyes brightened, and a cheery voice replied: 'No fear of that, dear mother!' and kissing each other, they parted. That prayer was granted. In her sleep, about daybreak—

> 'She came to Jordan's tide,
> And taking the hand of her Saviour,
> Went up on the heavenly side.'

Her mother's Sunday morning kiss fell upon a pure sweet dead brow. Our thoughts were of Life and Resurrection as she lay beneath the lilies brought by loving hands, and when we laid her under the daisied turf by her father's side.

A few words in conclusion. Since the 'Monthly Packet' first appeared in her childhood, we had taken it for her benefit, and I doubt if any subscriber enjoyed it more. Often, when tired or unwell, she would ask one to bring her 'a few volumes; I like to ferret through them for myself.' In its large circle of readers may there not be some few with trials akin to hers, heavy-hearted, even though resigned—thinking that happiness is out of their reach? To such, Adela Dundas, 'being dead, yet speaketh.' When I think over the many good, capable, and happy lives I have ever intimately known, I revert to my little sister's as the sunniest of all. One cross, taken up in early life and meekly borne, may therefore not only be the sanctifying, but the gladdening and glorifying of an earthly course. Not without many a secret struggle did she attain to her loveliness of character, it is ever thus. The spirit that wrestles through the dark hour with its Maker, arises a true child of the Israel of God, bearing His disabling touch as the pledge of victory. If it may be, that some solitary reader, searching these pages as she loved to do, chance upon the record of one who has passed the waves of this troublesome world—that some storm-pressed bark may take fresh courage, knowing that her sources of strength and joy are open to all; let me cheer such to higher achievement in words from the

little poem she once gave as her favourite—words which thrill the hearts of those who miss her most—

'To veer—how vain! on onward strain,
Brave barks in light in darkness too,
Through winds and tides—one compass guides,
To that and your own selves be true.

But O, blithe breeze; and O, great seas!
Though ne'er, that earliest parting past,
On your wide plain they join again,
Together lead them home at last.

One port methought, alike they sought
One purpose hold, where'er they fare,
O bounding breeze! O rushing seas!
At last—at last—unite them there!'

L. D.

THE TURMOILS OF A MEDIÆVAL CITY.

BY THE AUTHORS OF 'HISTORIC WINCHESTER.'

NOWHERE in England do the stones speak more eloquently of past times than they do in Winchester, the city of kings and of ecclesiastics, the city where religion flourished and fought with greater warmth than in any other of England's fair cities. Philistines there have been in the shape of Puritan soldiers who destroyed carving and effigies; way wardens who mended the roads with stones from the massive city gates; modern builders who run up cheap red brick tenements on the site of 17th-century houses or of time-honoured city walls, and all these have between them left England's first capital with but a small proportion of its ancient glory.

And yet though the Bishop's castle and the King's castle no longer tower over the surrounding houses—though the many convents and churches remain only in traditional sites—even with what is left we can, helped by history and imagination, build up the past again, still hear the discord between King and Bishop, Bishop and Prior; and if some of these quarrels, so earnestly undertaken, now look puerile to modern ideas, and the rivalries of Franciscans and Dominicans call up a smile on our lips as we read in what petty ways those champions of religion degraded their Christianity, may we not ask ourselves whether the ecclesiastical disputes which now embitter men's minds will seem to our posterity five centuries hence of any more vital importance?

If we confine ourselves to the reign of that King whose young forehead was so early circled by the crown, and who only laid it down after long years of sorrow and conflict, brought about chiefly by himself and his advisers, we shall have a good picture of the feuds and feasts of a city in the Middle Ages. For at Winchester Henry III. was born, and that city was doubtless his most peaceful home when, after the death of the good Earl of Pembroke, the guardianship of His little Majesty fell to the powerful and strife-loving Bishop of Winchester, Peter des Roches, who did not object to the boy-king enjoying himself, playing at quintain perhaps, or riding out along the Itchen valley, if he—the Bishop—were left to his own devices and allowed to interfere to what extent he liked in the affairs of the much-suffering realm.

We need only give a glance at the city in this 13th century to see how many, and how suggestive of discord, were the rival interests gathered together within and hard by its enclosing walls. First there were the townsfolk, keen about their trade and their charters, on which, to a great extent, their trade depended, anxious to

walk circumspectly and avoid offending His Majesty who was so often in their midst, or the King's powerful lords who came in his retinue, and whilst lodging in the castle or town had to be propitiated with humble demeanour and presents. Then there were the various Benedictine monasteries—the Old Minster of St. Swithun, where the prior held sway over a black-robed company of some sixty monks; whilst just outside the town was a rival body, priding themselves, and apparently with justice, on their superior learning and intellectual attainments—the new Abbey, of Alfred's foundation and Henry I.'s translation, to the importance of which the Liber de Hyda testifies; and in the town there was the Convent of St. Mary, with its large grounds adjoining the High Street. The Bishop, too, had his home—one of his homes at least—here in the lordly castle of Wolvesey, now only a picturesque ruin, but then a large and important stronghold, where the King, when he did not care to go to his own castle at the top of the town, would often accept right royal entertainment as a visible proof of his good will towards his spiritual father, and where from within the massive walls, abbot, prior, mayor, or turbulent baron could safely be defied. Besides these elements—lay and ecclesiastical—there were of course the priests, secular and religious, who served the many churches and chapels in the city, and attended to or left alone the spiritual wants of the parishioners.

And in this reign we have to take into account an altogether new body of men, who came with such humility and true goodness that it would have been impossible to foretell how in after years the whole fury of the people and of the religious houses was to be turned against these followers of St. Francis of Assisi and of St. Dominic. With neither worldly goods nor retinue they came, these wandering Friars, but intent only on preaching the Gospel to the poor they lifted up an earnest soul-stirring cry of 'Repent ye,' which put to shame the over-fed monks and easy-going parish priests. It was only when the Pope began to use these great bodies of Franciscans and Dominicans for his own tools, that we find them lifted up in pride and becoming worse than those whom they came to awaken and reprove, showing how good things may corrupt themselves, turning their sweets to bitter.

We may thus realise what were some of the varied interests which existed in one place of no great size in the 13th century, and which we must bear in mind if we would understand the stirring events enacted there during the reign of Henry III. This old city, known well to Roman, Saxon, and Dane, nestling in the valley of the Itchen, had its principal street in the same position then as now, and most of the others either parallel or at right angles with it. The King's castle overlooked the town, the Cathedral, and the adjoining Priory, and round all rose the grey battlemented walls, with their five massive gates, and the smaller postern by the river—the west gate hard by the castle, the King's gate near St. Swithun's monastery, the north

and south gates crossing the road which leads from London to Southampton, and the east gate at the end of the long High Street, at the foot of St. Giles' Hill, where the great yearly fair was held.

This then was the outward state of things which Henry, when he came of age and took the reins of government into his own hands, found in the old town where he passed so many a Christmas festival. After his second coronation—with the crown of St. Edward now, for a little circlet of gold had served for the child's head—there was a writ sent out to prepare rooms for him in Winchester Castle. Two years later he was here again for Christmas, when, as Roger of Wendover tells us, 'Peter, Bishop of that place, provided the necessary entertainment for him.' De Roches was bent on making the young King favour the foreigners of whom he was the centre, as against Hubert de Burgh and the national party, and Henry, naturally weak, was guided sometimes by the former, sometimes by wiser advice. Finding that the latter was now the case—De Burgh being in the ascendant—the Bishop went off to a Crusade leaving Henry to get on without him for a while; but the Holy War, owing to the defection of the Emperor, came to an abrupt conclusion, and Winchester turned out with processions of welcome to receive her Bishop back to more peaceful pursuits again.

The mediæval mind loved these processions, and nowhere could a longer or more interesting line of march be provided than that which followed behind Abbot and Prior with the Shrine of St. Swithun carried aloft. The citizens on these occasions came out in their best garments, somewhat more picturesque than the frock coat and tall hat of the present day—tunics, many with the edges all indented or 'slyttered,' as Chaucer called it later on, with sleeves tight to the wrist, tight breeches, long and pointed shoes, quaint caps and coifs of various shapes, for dress was much thought of during the reign of the pleasure-loving Henry, making worthy Matthew Paris fling several disparaging remarks at its foppery and extravagance. Indeed, the Bishop does not seem to have been above paying attention to this mundane subject, for when Henry came here again for Christmas the former himself gave his servants their 'festive dresses,' that there might be no fear of their appearing shabbily attired before His Majesty.

That same year, 1232, was a memorable one for Winchester, not only ecclesiastically on account of the settlement of the Friars here, and for a visitation of all the religious houses by order of Pope Gregory IX., but also for the extensive preparations made for the erection of the Great Hall of the Castle—probably the only domestic building of that date now extant, and certainly the only part above ground which remains to give an idea of what that whole pile must have been. That the King had ideas, both on questions of structure and ornamentation, appears from the many interesting details concerning alterations and repairs in the Castle. A good deal of

architectural work was now going on in England, and Henry evidently encouraged it, as is proved by this Great Hall. Master Elias Dereham was its architect, and he must have been satisfied with his work, when after some years' labour the massive oak roof was put on, the windows glazed, and painting and whitewash added. The plans of Master Elias for the Castle were not always approved of by the King, at any rate he does not seem to have been allowed a monopoly, for the Sheriff of Southampton is ordered to have windows made in the King's painted chamber, because it was too dark, and the wainscote was to be painted green. Another time the sheriff is told to place a rood-loft in the chapel of the Castle, which was dedicated to St. Thomas the Martyr, i.e. to Thomas-a-Becket, whose bones had been carried to Canterbury with great pomp just after the King's coronation. The screen was to 'touch both walls of the seat of us and our Queen,' and images of 'Mary, John, and two angels' were to be added. There is an order also about Purbeck stone for the works at the Castle, which stone is to be conveyed and kept safely till the King has further commands on the subject.

But before Henry was married to Eleanor of Provence, and could send orders for her comfort and her religious needs in the Castle, there was much trouble in the kingdom. Peter de Roches, who headed the papal and anti-nationalist party, after ten years of constant opposition, brought about the fall of the patriotic Herbert de Burgh; he was disgraced, and deprived of his various offices, and these were immediately filled by friends and relations of the Bishop, whilst the King dismissed all his former counsellors, replacing them by the hated foreigners. Naturally this conduct was most unpopular, civil war broke out, and Henry, not gaining much advantage, was forced to retreat to Winchester with the Bishop. Here the latter was not idle; having the King at hand, he could obtain the sanction of the Royal Seal to anything he wished, and it was by this means that he procured the assassination of Richard Marshall, a friend and supporter of De Burgh. This murder, and the strong words of reproof used by the Archbishop, now roused the weak King; he suddenly changed his policy, turned against Peter de Roches and all his foreign advisers, and summoned them to give an account of their evil deeds, and the use they had made of his seal. The crafty Bishop, who cared little for his Cathedral town, now fled there for refuge, hiding himself with his nephew in some part of the Cathedral itself, as he had not the courage to appear before the King. This nephew, Peter de Rivaux, at last did so, and after a most unfriendly reception, and a short sojourn in the tower, he was sent back to keep his uncle company; for some reason, his presence amongst the Winchester people seems to have much displeased them, and to have caused a regular tumult, during which both Wolvesey Palace and the Priory were seized by the insurgents. Upon this, the Bishop used the only weapon left to him,—his power of excommunication, cut off all his opponents from the

ministrations of the Church, and laid both city and cathedral under an interdict. Why the latter—his own harbour of refuge—should have been thus served, seems strange! Perhaps the Prior just then was inclined to favour the King. However, De Roches, finding things too hot for him at present, left the country for a two years' sojourn in Rome.

The citizens of Winchester probably possessed decided views in this national dispute, having personal knowledge of both King and Bishop; but doubtless they were glad to turn their thoughts to the more festive subject of the Royal wedding, and were all proud of the right, which they alone could claim and exercise, of superintending the cooking of the marriage feast at Westminster. The Provençal bride, was, alas! to bring in another set of foreigners and fresh difficulties for England, but no fears for the future interfered with the magnificence of the festivities, or with the adornment of London, where, as it is specially stated, 'all the roads were cleansed from mud, dirt, sticks, and everything offensive.' Matthew Paris tells, in profuse words, all about the wonderful event, ending with, 'Why describe the abundance of meats and dishes on the table, the quality of venison, the variety of fish, the joyous sound of gleemen, and the gaiety of waiters?'

In June, 1836, the King came to Winchester, and met his Lords in a great council. Peter de Rivaux was here, and not now as a prisoner; indeed, Henry seemed already turning round again, for he tried to take away some grants he had made to the Church, using the Pope's name to help him. The truth was, that the new wife was an expensive addition, and how to get money was a difficult problem. His many houses and castles were a drain upon the King's resources, his favourites had always been able to get what they liked out of him, and yet the country was ill able to afford him gifts. Wherever the money was to come from, however, the Queen must have, without delay, an aisle from her chamber in Winchester Castle to the chapel; doubtless, used as she was to the South, she did not care to step out of doors for her daily attendance at Mass. The glass also, in the windows of the Hall, must be repaired by the Sheriff of Southampton, for it was December, and glass, though probably as yet only in moveable frames, had become a necessity for Kings, as a protection by day against the outer air, which hitherto had free access, except when the heavy wooden shutters were closed at night. Moreover, Her Majesty apparently liked pretty colours, for the dais is to be painted green with gold stars on it, and 'histories' of the Old and New Testament in circles.

The frequent mention of chimneys in the orders to the poor Sheriff of Southampton, shows plainly that architects did not then, any more than they do at present, always fathom the perversity of smoke, and that the Queen objected to being stifled, for especial care is to be taken to repair her chimney. Now that the King is married, there is

more attention paid to the outside beauty of religion; he writes—still to the sheriff—to 'make also a small Mary with a great tabernacle for the chapel of our aforesaid Queen, and a certain painted tablet to be placed before the altar of the same chapel.' It is to be hoped that the sheriff had artistic tastes, or otherwise 'the small Mary' must have been but a poor image. Perhaps, however, the sheriff's taste was deficient, for the next 'images' had to be provided by 'the keepers of the Bishoprick of Winchester,' who had to make, among other things, 'a certain house of deal, running upon six wheels, and covered with lead.' Then the Queen's chapel had to be wainscoted, and the passage to the chapel of St. Thomas; moreover, a 'herbary' was to be made, and a wall here and there, and four more images to be bought for the porch of the Hall. For the Hall itself, a map of the world was to be painted, somewhat similar, perhaps, to the one at Hereford, and it is rather curious that, among the Cotton MSS., there exists a cosmographical 'scheme,' purporting to be after the design of the before-named architect of this very hall: 'secundum magistrum Elya de Derham.'* More glass, too, was needed for the Hall windows, and a cellar under the Queen's chamber, perhaps to keep out the damp, for the great ditch, often full of water, ran close by, and many a time, doubtless, must Eleanor have sighed for the drier air and bluer skies of her sunny Provence home. The next time the King sends an order, it is for 'a drawbridge with a bretache over it,' then another of the Castle Chapels—that of St. Judoc (for there were four)—is to have a porch, and St. Thomas's Chapel a bell; more orders also concerning wainscoting and chimneys, this time in the King's chamber, and two furnaces ordered for the kitchen.

But though Henry might perhaps have a turn for improving castles, he certainly had none for ruling men, and Winchester had many evil days to endure in connection with the quarrels of its sovereign. The restless Bishop had returned, and in 1237 he was once more received into favour by his King, who, to prove his affection, appointed him one of his representatives at a great meeting of all the princes of Christendom, summoned by the German Emperor. De Roches, however, remonstrated, and indeed positively refused to go, not having forgotten all the 'heavy complaints' the King had made against him, and pretending that, if he went as his representative, their previous disagreements might cause him to be doubtfully received; but, considering how often the two had quarrelled and made it up, it seems more likely that the Bishop wanted to get off the journey to Vaucouleurs, for he was now an old man, and his earthly warfare was drawing to an end. He was leaving his Cathedral town and diocese in a bad way. Everywhere was poverty and discontent.

* When the present ornament of the Hall, the so-called 'round table of Arthur,' was made, it is impossible to say, perhaps in the following reign, to commemorate Edward's creation of so many knights, perhaps not till much later, for there seems to be no absolutely authentic mention of it before the 16th century, when, however, it was old enough to need considerable repair.

both nobles and commons disapproving strongly of the King's conduct, of the papal tyranny, of the foreign influences generally which were unduly exerted in this country. The noble shrine of St. Swithun behind the High Altar had been broken by the falling of a trap-door—an evil omen doubtless in the eyes of the citizens, the town was getting more crowded with monks and friars, whilst Peter de Roches, like the Pope, patronised the new orders—probably wishing to play them off against the old ones. His own place was being taken by the Queen's relations, for Henry was turning towards his wife's uncle, William, Bishop of Valence, and it was time for the Bishop to leave the see over which he had ruled for thirty-two years; and, though he could not have been regarded at all as an ideal Bishop, yet Winchester opened its Cathedral to him, and the old man was laid to rest within its peaceful walls. Perhaps it is his recumbent figure which may be seen in the retro choir, but tradition has not handed down his resting-place with much certainty, only—according to Matthew Paris—he had, during his life, chosen for himself a humble tomb.

Great trouble and confusion now befell the monastery of St. Swithun, for the monks had the right of electing the new Bishop, but the King had to agree in their choice, and the Pope had to consent to it. Henry wished the William of Valence, before mentioned, to have the bishopric, but the monks had had enough of a foreigner, and demanded, first, Ralph de Neville, Bishop of Chichester (the Chancellor of the kingdom), and then William de Raleigh. A long struggle now began. Henry was determined to get his way, he had an interview with the monks, prayed and entreated, made technical objections to their election, and 'kicked against it for a long time,' the only result being that no Bishop at all was appointed. He then appropriated to himself the money of the see, and lived in its manors with a large retinue. At last, when by all this he had failed to obtain the election of his nominee, he came one day to Winchester, entered the Chapter House, and demanded, with threats, that William de Valence should be elected. The monks now dropped the name of the last chosen, and again declared their wish for Ralph de Neville. This turned the King's wrath still more against the unfortunate Chancellor, and though he was 'a man faithful and discreet, and almost the only pillar of truth among the courtiers,' yet his Chancellor's seal was taken from him, and, by means of 'Rome-footed' lawyers, his election was caused to be rendered void.

Still, however, the struggle continued, and Henry bethought him of corrupting the monks, as he could not compel them to have De Valence, who was longing to get possession of the rich see. He therefore put into the monastery a new Prior, one Andrew of Brittany, who turned the hearts of many, and inclined them to the foreigner; but after all it was not to be, for De Valence suddenly died (poison of course being the supposed cause), to the great grief of the King, who, not only in the Biblical fashion tore his clothes, but also threw

them into the fire! The 'spurious Prior' was, however, still in office, and though some of the elder monks, who had come back from Rome with power to elect an Englishman as Bishop, again mentioned De Raleigh, yet the task was by no means easy. On all sides there seemed trouble, for besides the tyranny of the King there was the Pope's legate squeezing money from every one. Otho, or Ottoboni, had been here three years, and Henry had heaped favours upon him. During that time he had paid a visit to Winchester and demanded to see the treasure of the Cathedral (doubtless with a view to transferring some of it to Rome), and when his demand was refused he had laid the Cathedral under an interdict, thereby putting a stop to the services. This was, however, but of short duration, for happily the Pope now recalled him, and he departed with many kisses from the King, but with regrets from no one else.

Yet this did not relieve Winchester of the difficulty of their choice. The monks of St. Swithun's were still in a state of suspense, when suddenly some Court 'satelites' descended on the unfortunate monastery and demanded the names of those brethren who had so 'saucily' desired the election of Raleigh. Prior Andrew, who was perhaps at the bottom of this disturbance, handed over some of the monks, and they, without respect of age, were imprisoned, starved, and subjected to every kind of reproach and insult. But not yet would the monks give in, and the Prior determined on still more severe measures, and having sent again for more of the King's agents, he told them to seize the rebels. The monks fled to the High Altar in the Cathedral; but the King's men cared nothing about sanctuary, and, rushing up the steps, they dragged the poor men away and out into the town, when the citizens, who dared not rescue them, were yet grieved at the sight and loudly proclaimed their indignation at it. But this did not, however, save the monks from being led off to the castle at Husvetrey, and there, tied two and two together, they were thrown into dark dungeons, when amidst all their hunger and cold they never dreamt of giving in, but endured suffering for the sake of upholding justice and the privileges of their order.

Henry must have nearly wearied out the patience of his 'loyal subjects,' still, when he came home from a visit to Gascony, he expected a grand reception. Having landed at Portsmouth, he sent word that not only all the nobles, but also four burgesses from every borough, were to meet him at Winchester, much to the annoyance of those who had to come long distances. The city was ordered to put on festive garb, the old streets, many of them picturesquely—though also inconveniently—narrow, were hung with curtains and tapestry; autumn flowers were wreathed across, and lighted tapers placed about. The bells of the Cathedral and of all the churches were set ringing, whilst lords of high degree, burgesses from other towns dressed in their best and their horses richly caparisoned, vied with the citizens themselves in gayest holiday attire, to show at least in outward sign

the marks of welcome to their King. After this he passed on towards London, where more processions and festivities, 'as pompous as they were sumptuous,' were to signal his return.

Winchester was not, however, to be free of trouble for all its loyal demonstration. The election of the new Bishop was to be felt by the peaceable inhabitants, and the story of Bishop Raleigh's difficulty in getting possession of his see is most curious as showing how strained and complicated was the whole question of Roman influence. The Pope's demands for money did not suit with the King's eagerness to fill his own coffers, and therefore Henry, feeling the latter to be of the greatest importance, and having made up his mind that Raleigh should not be Bishop of Winchester, began a most strenuous persecution of the monks' nominee. The Pope's consent had now been obtained to the latter, and all the right formularies had been gone through, except the King's acceptance of him and the kiss which was the sign of it; but though the poor man's own see of Norwich was given away, he was not yet allowed to come to Winchester. Raleigh, however, meaning to do without the King's consent, called himself Bishop of Winchester, and acted as such; but Henry, who could be very firm in a wrong cause, refused to give in, and prohibited any dealing with De Raleigh, even to the 'supplying him with necessary victuals' —a case of boycotting surely even in those early days.

The citizens of Winchester must have been very ignorant of all the ins and outs of this, but they could, however, see for themselves that their Prior within the walls was a more powerful man than the Bishop without. In 1243 Andrew died, but his successor, John de Caux, another foreigner, as his name shows, was quite ready to follow in his footsteps. When messengers came from the King with orders that all the city gates were to be closed against the Bishop, the Prior spoke strongly to his monks, and also gave it out in the city that no one must offer any help to De Raleigh, under pain of the King's displeasure. This meant loss of money, and had to be weighed against the Bishop's wrath, which was suggestive merely of spiritual loss, and the thought of the money won the day. The Bishop arrived and found all the gates shut; he came in humble guise and barefooted, and petitioned to enter the city—probably by the King's gate—and to proceed to the Cathedral. He then went to the other gates, but in vain, all were equally barred against him, the Mayor, having the King's message in his mind, 'saucily refused him admittance,' and added insult to insult.

Bishop Raleigh now altered his tone, and pronounced an interdict against the whole city, the Cathedral, and all the other churches; as to the rebellious monks, a fearful anathema was hurled against them. One cannot help wondering whether this really interfered in any way with the life of the city, whether the bells ceased either to chime or toll, and whether all religious rites were stopped. Certainly the Prior would take no notice of episcopal wrath, and the monks must

have dreaded the King's prisons more than the Bishop's curses; still, the Church at large was scandalised at the fact, and three Bishops set out to find the King in order to bring him to a better mind. Henry had laid hands on the manors and the monies of the Bishop, he had also chosen some more 'Rome-footed' messengers to try and turn the Pope, and by bribes he had hoped to attach them more surely to his side. His Majesty was not anxious, therefore, to be reproved by the Bishops of Lincoln, Worcester, and Hereford, so he gave them the slip, 'declining their salutary admonition,' as Matthew Paris quaintly puts it. At last the three Bishops found Henry at Westminster, but he refused to discuss the subject, and asked for time till his messengers should return, to which their lordships agreed. Raleigh, after a short stay in London, where he could not have been very comfortable, as the London citizens also were forbidden to supply him with food, fled to France, knowing well that Henry would especially dislike any interference which the French king might be induced to make. Louis was extremely civil to the unfortunate Bishop, and said: 'Look you there at the King of England, idle and ignorant with regard to all the enemies of the kingdom, he persecutes and proscribes all his holy Bishops.'

This holy Bishop now determined to bring *his* influence also to bear upon the Papal Court. He evidently understood that the only key to unlock difficulties was one of gold, and he found that a sum of 8000 marks stirred very much the affection of the Pope towards him. The latter wrote a letter to Henry, saying that 'as we have determined in our own mind to hold you in special favour above all the other princes of the earth, you will of necessity act honourably towards' the Bishop, and return to him his see and all his manors. He even wrote to the Queen, telling her that she was a relation of his, and he made a Latin pun on the power of women to soften men, and at last Henry gave way, after making Raleigh promise not to insist on his refunding any of the money belonging to the see, and to forgive every one who had offended him, and specially to take away the excommunication from the people of Winchester, showing that in some way it did press heavily upon them.

On the strength of this, Bishop Raleigh returned from France, and was met by a goodly number of friends at Dover—though certain, we are told, whose consciences were too much disturbed with their share in his troubles, kept away—after which, coming to the King, he was received with a 'smiling and pleased look.' When the Bishop at last entered Winchester, there were many who, in spite of their consciences, assembled there to do him honour. Prior John de Caux and all the monks made a virtue of necessity, and humbled themselves; the clergy, too, who had sided with them, now made atonement; the Mayor also received the Bishop civilly; but one cannot help rather pitying him, for whilst Raleigh only deposed the Prior, the Mayor, who was less to blame, was subjected to heavier punishment. It must, indeed,

have been a difficult matter to keep on good terms with both secular and ecclesiastical authorities in those days!

King Henry had not much to congratulate himself upon in the present state of his kingdom, which the contemporary chronicler describes as in a most desolate condition, as was the Church also. The nobles were hard pressed for money, and the Pope was draining the English people more and more. In 1246 a great Council took place in the new hall of Winchester Castle, and the King could, from the Solar Chamber, hear the various discussions, even when not present. The Council was angered by a message from the Pope which Master William de Poweris and Master Henry de la Mare now delivered. The Pope distinctly refused to remit his tithes, and said: 'The King of England, who is now kicking against me, and following the example of Frederick, has his own plans, and I have mine, which I will follow.'

The English are not a people who can stand threats, and even Henry, who—like a pendulum—sided with the Pope, or against him, according to the freak of the moment, then sanctioned a proclamation to be made in all market towns and villages, that no more contributions were to go to the Pope. When this was heard, many a Winchester citizen must have smiled, knowing well that the weak King would not keep it in force very long. This was indeed the case, and all the fine talking in the Winchester assembly soon proved to be so much wasted breath; for soon the Pope wanted money again, and a rumour got afloat of a possible interdict in case of its not being forthcoming, then of course the King gave in—influenced by those who cared less for anathemas than for the loss of benefices and manors.

To understand how distant Rome could make England tremble, we must remember that Innocent was not slow in using for his own ends the new orders before mentioned, those of the Franciscans and Dominicans—the Minorites and Preachers. He gave them power to collect money for him, to interfere in the matter of wills, and to take possession of the property of those who died intestate. No wonder that these orders of poverty attracted many, and that a certain Bishop of Carlisle 'renounced the world he had so long clung to,' in order to be invested with the habit of the Preachers. They could now gain the ear of those in high places, and were becoming powerful, not only by means of money gained for themselves, but by the inquisitorial enquiries made into the lives of the rich as well as of the poor. Of course this was all very right on the face of it, but when we notice how easily they acquiesced in the rapacity of Rome, one is led to doubt whether their anxiety for the soul of an ungodly landowner was altogether unconnected with the seizure of his manors after he had been excommunicated. Anyhow, the Court was indignant when the news came that Raleigh was, according to the advice of the friars, enquiring about the 'morals of the noble as well as ignoble,' and the

King wrote at once to stop these inquisitions. Still, Henry's pleasure or displeasure was not a thing of long continuance, and at Christmas Winchester once more put on festive garb to receive its royal visitor. Bishop Raleigh went out to meet the King with a goodly retinue of picked nobles, and earnestly invited His Majesty to a banquet with him on the Christmas festival, so that every one might see that peace was established between them. Accordingly the next day the King was seen going in procession to Wolvesey Palace to break bread with the very Bishop whom he had so cruelly persecuted.

If Winchester rejoiced, as it most likely did, to think that it should not again be called on to side with either my Lord Bishop or my Lord King, it certainly rejoiced too soon; but the town was at least to have a change from ecclesiastical to more secular troubles. For two years later, in 1249, we find Henry in quite a new rôle in Winchester, in that of meting out justice—an occupation not hitherto much affected by him. But importunity could do a great deal with this King, and as he was spending Lent in his castle, he had time to listen to two Brabant merchants who complained bitterly of having been robbed of 200 marks by some English freebooters, whom they now recognised at Henry's Court, being quite willing by single combat to prove the truth of their accusation. Of course there were false witnesses ready to declare on oath the innocence of the freebooters. But the merchants were not to be put off by false oaths, and Henry, still more importuned, really took the matter up, and, collecting all the responsible persons, he gave them most severe reproof with 'a scowling look' in the Great Hall. The Bishop was there, and of course the nobles. The King's opening speech ended in these words: 'I was born in this city, and never was disgrace brought on me anywhere as here. It is probable, and I must believe—nay, it is now quite clear—that you, the citizens and inhabitants of the province, are infamous accomplices and confederates. I shall convoke all the counties of England that they may try you as traitors to me, and may detect your crimes; nor will the arguments of cunning profit you any longer.' Then he added: 'Shut the gates of the castle immediately.' At this rose up the Bishop and suggested to the King that he was shutting up some very blameless strangers, and turning to the multitude, who had gathered together to behold these unusual proceedings, he excommunicated all who either by act or by concealment of the evil-doers belonged to this band of robbers. Twelve Winchester citizens were thereupon selected, and being removed to a private place, were bidden to deliver up the names of the transgressors; but they refused—not because of any great desire to shield the guilty, but because a list of names would have included several of the King's special attendants, and Henry's justice was but of new birth. Their refusal, however, only gained them a deep dungeon and condemnation to be hung! Twelve more were then chosen, and these, taking warning by the fate of their fellows, disclosed all they knew of this system of brigandage

and the names of the guilty freebooters. Among them were nobles, rich citizens, officers of the royal household, as well as some of the bailiffs and guardians of the peace, whose duty it was to drive away robbers! Thirty were hung, and as many more imprisoned; but the King had to suffer for his fit of justice, as his own officers, when about to suffer death, sent him a message to say that their past actions were owing to his having so long withheld their rightful pay from them. Henry's conscience must have pleaded guilty to this charge, for we are told he gave vent to his sorrow in protracted sighs, though he does not seem to have spared the lives of the truth-tellers.

Winchester incurred an indelible stain from these events, and the King did not allow the city to forget its sins when, on Bishop Raleigh's death shortly after, all the troubles of a new election began over again. Raleigh had spent so much money at the time of his exile in his heavy *douceurs* to the Pope, who only, 'on being richly remunerated, opened the bosom of consolation to him,' that he was forced to leave his city home and retrench at Tours, and there, after nearly a year's sojourn, he died.

On the whole the Bishop had come out well in the various troubles of his episcopate; but doubtless as shepherd of his large diocese he had many shortcomings to remember on his death-bed. We are told how when the Viaticum was then being brought to him, seeing the priest approaching, he cried, 'Wait a while, my friend, it is proper that I, who am a traitor to and disparager of my God, should be carried before Him,' and the dying Bishop was then carried to the Host, which he received with tears of contrition, and shortly after passed away. When the King heard of the event he gave utterances, says the chronicler quaintly, to 'brief sorrow with dry tears.'

Henry now fixed upon his half-brother, Æthelmar de Lusignan, as successor to De Raleigh. He was a young man of twenty-three, only in deacon's orders, and neither in age or knowledge fitted for a Bishop. He wanted money, and so the King, with his usual mixture of weakness and obstinacy, was bent upon forcing him at once on the unhappy brethren of St. Swithun's. Two persuasive clerks were sent down to Winchester, and for fifteen days they talked to the monks and threatened them, urging them to demand Æthelmar. This they reluctantly agreed to do, whereupon the King hastened to his native town, entered the Chapter House unannounced, and taking the Bishop's seat, he gave the astonished monks a regular sermon, choosing the somewhat inappropriate text of 'Righteousness and Peace have kissed each other.' In this long discourse he said he was glad they had demanded Æthelmar, and that it was indeed well for them they had done so, and while allowing that before he did them injury in wishing to force the Queen's uncle upon them, yet now as he wanted them to have his own brother he would encircle them with the arms of heartfelt affection. They were to remember also (and this was one of Henry's old and well-worked arguments) that he was

born in the city and baptised in the Cathedral, and that therefore they ought not to oppose his wishes in any way, but should complete the election at once.

The monks were again in an unenviable position; they remembered former persecutions; they knew that even if they appealed to Rome there was 'no place of refuge open to them in the bosom of our father the Pope,' and so they gave in and unanimously declared Æthelmar to be their nominee, on the condition that by a papal dispensation he could be qualified to become a Bishop. Alas! they knew well enough that with Rome money could obtain anything, and so it was that Aylmar or Ethelmar (as his name stands in his Cathedral) became nominally Bishop, though he was never consecrated!

Henry, never an ideal Sovereign, was now going from bad to worse. He had condemned robbery at Winchester, but was not ashamed himself to rob merchants in order to send presents to the Friars Minor or Franciscans, who—more honest than their King—returned the stolen property. Everything seemed wrong. Simon de Montfort was being accused falsely for too well serving his King in Gascony, and Æthelmar, about whose appointment the King had taken such trouble, almost immediately turned against him.

As usual, Henry was hard up for money, so much so that it was matter of comment that in his Christmas feast at Winchester in 1251, both the richness and hospitality of the royal table was diminished, and no festive dresses were given to his retainers as had been always the custom. He had often wished to squeeze money out of the Church, and sometimes succeeded; but the clergy—no less than the Barons and citizens—tried to resist. Now with short-sighted obstinacy, the King made another attempt. He pretended that he had taken the Cross, and would go on a crusade if only his 'pressing state of necessity' might be assisted. Even this plea, however, did not cause the Bishops to give in, and through John, Bishop of Ely, they reminded their exacting and extravagant King that 'if we prelates yielded to your unrestrained will, the Church would be impoverished, and, to the injury of your pledge and oath, would be subject to perpetual tribute and perpetual slavery.'

The King next turned to Æthelmar, thinking surely he would yield; but curiously enough, the Bishop-Elect would not go against his brethren. 'My Lord, I am young in years, but do you wish, because you have made me what I am, that I should act as a child?' Yet after all he did not show much maturity of wisdom, for he directly afterwards engaged in a foolish quarrel with the Archbishop, which made great scandal in the Church. He also disagreed with the Prior at Winchester and deposed him, and it was only after the latter had employed 'Rome-footed' men that he was able to get himself reinstated.

Henry meanwhile went on as usual, regarding no charters, having foreign favourites who trampled on the English, and for any slight

offence taking his usual revenge of making the offenders pay largely, yet forgetting his poverty when it suited him, sufficiently to keep his Christmas again at Winchester with great magnificence. His advancing age, instead of bringing wisdom, seemed to make him more mean and grasping, and the dear town of his birth suffered equally with others. In this Christmas week (of 1253) the citizens collected a large present of good things for His Majesty, and sent it up to the Castle. All beholders applauded the gift, and the King graciously accepted it; but before his departure he had forgotten this, and made the city give him 200 marks, thereby turning joy into mourning for the loyal folk, who groaned under the arbitrary demands of rulers, both civil and ecclesiastical.

The land cried out that its laws should not be broken, every city trembled for its liberties; but what was the use when Henry respected neither justice nor oath. Even the solemn assembly of Bishops, with lighted tapers in their hands, was nothing to him; he himself joined with them in throwing down the tapers, and when, as the unsavoury odour arose from the extinguished heap, the Archbishop exclaimed, 'Thus then perish and stink the condemned souls of those who shall either violate or wrongfully interpret the said Charter,' the King more eagerly and more frequently than the others loudly responded, 'Amen, Amen.'

And yet he cannot have been altogether satisfied with his last episcopal appointment, when the monks of St. Swithun's appealed to him against his brother Æthelmar, who was working great havoc in Winchester. This one act of opposition to the King seems to have been the only good deed of this Bishop, so that one fears it must have been somehow from interested motives; and the monks must have felt amply punished for their former weakness in nominating him when, offended with them for some cause, he shut them up in the Cathedral for three days before Michaelmas! A sojourn in the great cold Cathedral was no slight penance, even in those less luxurious days, and the health of some of the poor brethren was so injured by it that they never recovered, whilst those who could do so fled to other houses, until Æthelmar called them back again to their convent, into which he put new monks, 'rogues and unworthy persons.' All this time the deposed Prior was hoping for justice from Rome, but was unable to get it owing to the influence of Æthelmar's gold, and a flatterer, another Prior Andrew, reigned in his place, whilst the Bishop, to crown his misdeeds, knew not English or the rudiments of the arts, worst of all, 'not even grammar'; by this must be meant the Latin Delectus, in which some of the monks certainly were not deeply versed. Yet these seem but small offences in comparison with those of the King, who was pledging his kingdom to the Pope in order to raise money for the war which the latter had undertaken against Germany.

It was always the same with Henry—this constant lack of money

and the question of how to pay ever-increasing debts. The Christmas season, however, generally found him in his native city, and now it is, as in former years, the Bishop who entertains him and gives him rich presents out of the episcopal funds. The King feebly urged that justice should be done to the monks of St. Swithun's, for even his conscience could not be altogether silenced in face of the desolation which reigned in the great Priory; but the Bishop only jeered, and assured his brother of his determination to work his own will there, as Rome would always be on his side, because he could fill her insatiable mouth with gold. Yet, after all, Henry was certainly his own worst enemy. There were patriots who would have helped him to govern rightly, men whom he might have trusted, and Prince Edward earnestly demanded justice for Gascony, which country his father had given to him; but Henry only bemoaned his own likeness to the first Plantagenet, whose children turned against him, and the Prince, taking the hint, rode out in public with two hundred retainers. There was no knowing what the King might or might not do, whilst all the while Simon de Montfort was making ready to revenge his wrongs and those of the country. We cannot wonder at the groans of the chronicler. Even the elements seemed to have turned against England; the autumn inundations destroyed the fruits of the earth, the scarcity of money caused a famine, and wheat was at 10*s.* a measure; pestilence and fever were rife, and men died by hundreds.

And the following year matters in no way improved. The Barons under Earl Simon were forced to take up arms in order to obtain redress from a King too weak and faithless to keep promises save through fear, and at the Mad Parliament at Oxford they were firm in demanding the dismissal of the hated foreigners. Thus it came to pass that Winchester was once more to be a temporary refuge for the unworthy Poitevins. At that Oxford Parliament they were at last convinced that their day was over, and they fled, frequently looking behind them to see if the Barons were following, and did not spare their horses until they could demand entrance at the north gate of Winchester. Here Æthelmar's strong castle of Wolvesey was safe for a little while; but he himself must fly, for the Barons were now in full pursuit, and soon presented themselves at Winchester, some say under the leadership of Earl Simon himself. Winchester could not have had a spark of feeling left for its unworthy Bishop, one of whose latest acts had been to eject a priest from a church of which he claimed the patronage, the unfortunate man, who resisted the illegal proceedings, being killed without scruple by the Bishop's messengers. And there must have been great rejoicing when Æthelmar and his brothers were forced to fly, and reaching some port as soon as possible, made their way to France. One cannot help smiling at the Bishop-Elect of Winchester humbly asking leave of Louis to remain in Paris as a scholar. Had the persecuted monks made him ashamed of his ignorance of grammar?

Again, the brethren of St. Swithun's, with their reinstated Prior, now raised to the rank of an Abbot by the ring, mitre, and crozier which the Pope had bestowed upon him, met to elect a Bishop, for Æthelmar's banishment left the flock without one. The King's Chancellor, Henry of Wingham, was chosen; but, remembering the hardships endured by Raleigh, he demurred, and only accepted the office at last on the condition that he should retire if the Pope were found to be willing to consecrate Æthelmar, and he were willing to return! The Pope had, however, chosen John of Exeter, who was able to pour 6000 marks into the treasury of the Holy Father, and thus to gain the See of Winchester and to oust Wingham.

Vows could not have appeared of much consequence then, when the Pope could bind and loose so easily, and Henry now obtained release from his promises at Oxford. On hearing this, however, his son Edward was extremely angry, and at once returned from the Continent, objecting strongly to his father's unconstitutional government; and at one time (in 1258) the breach became wide enough to necessitate a public reconciliation in the Chapter House at Winchester. Edward's remonstrances seem, however, to have been of little use, and now began the great struggle with the Barons, into the details of which we cannot enter except when they touch the fortunes of Winchester. King Henry taking refuge sometimes in one castle, sometimes in another, came again (1261) to his old native city; but shortly after a well-armed force of Barons approached the gates, and the weak King, not having strength of mind (or possibly strength of men or money) to resist, took the advice of John Mansell, and fled back to the Tower of London, where his foreign favourites gathered round him.

For three years war continued—open and concealed—while royal promises were repeated and broken. By that time several of the Barons had left Simon, and in 1264 Louis of France was asked to decide between him and the King, and this he did almost entirely in favour of the latter. But the main body of the people were still with De Montfort, and that same year Henry's cause was lost, and his person and that of his son taken possession of in the battle of Lewes. For several months the Earl now really ruled England, and during that time he summoned the famous Parliament, in which sat representatives from borough towns, though it is doubtful whether any member represented Winchester until eighteen years later.

The city seems to have been in a very unsettled state, and the relations between the civil and ecclesiastical authorities were in what would now be called a very strained condition—the former taking the side of the King, the latter that of De Montfort. Their antagonism soon took shape in action. A number of citizens collected near the gate of the Priory enclosure and stormed it, and great must have been the excitement in the motley throng attacking, and the black-robed monks defending, supported by all those connected with

the monastery. At last fire was resorted to, the massive door gave way with a crash, and a free fight ensued, during which some of the monastic buildings near were burnt, as well as the King's gate, with the Church of St. Swithun over it, and many people were killed.

During this time dissensions had sprung up in De Montfort's party, and Edward, now at liberty, was marching westward against him. The younger Simon was summoned to his father's assistance, and on his way he is said to have come to Winchester, but to have been refused entrance by the still loyal city. The monks of St. Swithun, who do not, however, appear to have been troubled by such scruples, treacherously admitted him, upon which he let loose his force upon the city, and sacked it horribly, especially that quarter in the north-east part of the town inhabited by Jews.

In the following month the battle of Evesham took place, when the great Earl was killed, and Henry felt himself once more free to call his Parliament of Magnates at Winchester. It was now in the King's power to deal out punishments, and in this he was not sparing—'ex-heredation' being the sentence of all the followers of De Montfort; and Bishop John, who, in company with the monks, had taken the popular side, was deposed. That the King's sentence was not meekly acquiesced in, we learn from the chronicler's statement that 'the disinherited parties thereupon assembled together, and indulged in pillage and incendiarism in all directions.'

There was now great distress and poverty in Winchester, and it was in consequence of this that its fee-farm rent was reduced from £80 to 100 marks. But the political troubles of the kingdom were now at an end, and Henry and his people went on together peaceably for the next seven years. The Papal Legate Ottoboni was now again in England, and had been diligently wielding his weapon of excommunication against all the clergy who had taken the popular side; Bishops had fallen under the ban, one being John of Winchester, who was succeeded by Nicholas, translated hither from Ely. Whether the Abbot of Hyde held different political views to his brother of St. Swithun's, or whether he merely wished to conciliate the higher powers, does not appear; but we know that the Legate was his guest at Hyde Abbey, which was just outside Winchester. Great festivities seem to have taken place; but the visit was the occasion also of considerable trouble, as a quarrel arose between Ottoboni's servants and those of the Abbey, which became so serious that the powerful guest thought it his duty to lay the whole establishment under an interdict.

And so the King's reign drew to a close; stormy and tempestuous it had been, but it was to end in more peaceful times, and with a few years of fairly constitutional government. William de Valence was at Winchester Castle, repairing its damages, and fortifying it in case the Barons might again prove troublesome at some future day. When he was absent his wife seems to have kept guard, for he writes her

word that he is sending Sir A. Immer to provision the castle, and to be under her orders. She would not be without amusement in this city, at any rate in the autumn, for there up above the further end of the town on the summit of the steep green hill, where 200 years before Earl Waltheof had suffered death, was held the great fair, now by royal favour allowed to continue for sixteen instead of fourteen days.

For many years it was only rivalled in Europe by the fair of Beaucaire, in Languedoc, and those only who have seen one of the great continental fairs can at all realise in these modern days how gay must have been the scene on the green down where all nationalities mingled together, and where king's messengers jostled against ordinary burghers in order to secure the best wax, pepper, and cummin; but the pepper had to be carefully scrutinised, for a few years back there had been a great outcry from the supposition that the vile Saracens had poisoned it in order to destroy the Christians!

It was, indeed, no common event this St. Giles' fair. On the previous evening—the last day of August—the Mayor of Winchester went sadly to one of the city gates—either the King's gate or the south gate—and there handed to the Bishop's officers ('justiciarii pavilionis,' as they are styled) the keys of the city; for during the fair time the Bishop received the toll levied on all merchandise that passed through for sale, except some small sums allotted to Hyde Abbey, St. Swithun's Priory, etc. No wonder there were disputes between the various authorities, their retainers, the merchants, and the townsfolk, for all the city shops had to be shut, and every trade was stopped within seven leagues, this including Southampton, where no buying or selling was allowed except of victuals, and to the Bishop belonged 'all weyfs and strays' within the seven leagues. It is to be hoped that the amusement of the fair made up for some of the sorrows of the ordinary shopkeepers. The summit of the hill was covered with stalls arranged in regular streets. Some were of wood, some of stone not roofed in, and the streets were called after the various countries whose merchants had come often, at the risk of their lives, to sell their wares. There was the street of the Flemmyns, of Caen, Limoges, Bristol, Exeter, Cornwall. There, too, was Spice Street, Wool Street, Wheeler's Street, as well as the Goldsmithry, the Drapery, St. Swithun's Spicery.

There was a regular code of rules and bye-laws, and a special Court on the summit of the hill, where the Bishop's officers sat to see that they were kept; also fire—that worst enemy of all—had to be especially guarded against, for once St. Giles' Church hard by had been burnt down during fair time, and the citizens would not soon forget that conflagration.

One more scene and we have done—it is a peaceful one. The old King had had another Parliament at Winchester in 1268, when Prince Edward was made Seneschal of England, and two years later a Council

was summoned to consider the well-worn subject of money; but this time it was not wanted for a sham Crusade, but for the brave Prince who was really going to take the Cross. In the castle the King and his son took their last leave of each other, for Henry was to see his firstborn no more. Prince Edward bade farewell also to the monks of St. Swithun's as in full Chapter they were assembled in the old Chapter House, which had during the present reign been so often the scene of perplexed consultations and angry disputes relative to the elections of Bishop and Prior.

Two years after this, the old King was taken ill on his way from Norwich to London, and, stopping at St. Edmund's Abbey, he 'confessed his sins with humility, beating his heart with grief, remitted ill-will to all, and promised an amended state of life.' But, having broken so many promises in past times, Henry was not allowed the opportunity of keeping this one, for in a few days he died, after a reign of fifty-six years. During this time his native town had certainly passed through as many turmoils as the King, and the words in which a chronicler describes him—'he possessed robust strength, and was inconsiderate in his acts'—might perhaps not unfitly be applied to the city whose name he bore.

We shall not uselessly have recalled to modern readers these troublous times—troublous both to the country at large and to individual cities as well—if it should invest with somewhat more of general interest several of those men whom six centuries divide from us, especially the great monk-historian to whose chronicle we owe so much. We have at least shown that England has much to be thankful for in this Jubilee of Queen Victoria; for we indeed are not looking back upon such stormy fifty years as those over which Matthew Paris mourned, and which have been exemplified by the foregoing life of that city which must ever dispute with London the title of England's first capital.

A. R. Bramston
AND
A. C. Leroy.

ONE VIEW OF THE JUBILEE, 1887.

A NIGHT journey from the north, arranged when the overpowering heat of June 18th made a long day journey seem an impossibility, landed me at the Midland Station 4.25 A.M. of the morning of Tuesday, June 21*st*, 1887. It had long been broad daylight, indeed there had seemed no night, so lovely the sunset light on the stately towers of York Minster 8 P.M. the previous evening, and so hardly had the last breath of pure pale light faded in the north-west, before rosy light appeared again in the north-east of the cloudless sky. The morning was cold, and the warmth of the gas-lighted third class waiting-room very welcome; no other was open till six, and then only because its attendant wanted to get through her work early and be off herself to see the show. But all the station was already astir, and by seven nothing but one piece of very stale bread remained, until a fresh batch of rolls came in; and every cab had disappeared from the stand; and all outside—a long string—were engaged for those who had slept at the hotel. Walking, by the advice of a policeman, eastward to get into the underground railway for my seat in St. Margaret's Stand, Westminster, I met a hansom, and its driver, having first carefully enquired where I was going, consented to take me for 4*s*., saying all owners of cabs were charging the drivers 30*s*. for the use of them that day—I think the ordinary charge is sixteen—I at once consented, and we drove off through the great Russell centre of London, and down St. Giles and past St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, getting into no crush till past Whitehall. There our first stoppage was behind a barrow full of white Marguerite plants, and my horse made two rapid and very successful darts at the refreshing green foliage, for which the owner came up to me and demanded two shillings for damage, but departed content with one, and I hope sold his plants none the worse. Soon after, though not yet eight o'clock, I alighted; the block and confusion of vans, cabs, splendid carriages, decorators hurrying along with poles, and bass mattings and carpetings, etc. etc., became so thick. Even then the large stands all around had some occupants, and dignitaries of Church and State, and the plumed general officers and daintily-dressed ladies were waiting outside the Abbey entrances. I went at once to my seat, and thence surveyed the changing gay throng below, for soon after nine all traffic, but carriages taking people to the Abbey, was stopped, and of these, all but the royalties soon compelled to alight just opposite us, and walk thence under the covered awning—red and fawn striped—to the west and southern entrances. Even a young lady, who had eventually to

be lifted out of her carriage by two footmen and placed in a chair, and carried thus to the Abbey, could be granted no grace. Dr. Stainer was stopped, but finally suffered to pass; and the Archbishop of Canterbury, who was recognised and considerably cheered, the same. If only the great of the land had that day borne their names upon their backs, how much more interesting would these unknown Abbey ticket-holders have become! Cocked hats, and black velvet Court costumes, soon became as familiar as ordinary hats and coats, and brilliant scarlet and dark blue uniforms, bedecked with gold lace, embroidery and orders, were constantly passing to and fro beneath us. Still, as time passed on, one grew tired and pitied the elderly gentlemen and ladies, and delicate young ones so little accustomed to such early hours, already waiting in the Abbey. Westminster Hospital was crowded with platforms of seats of sightseers, even on the roof top, as was the Tower of St. Margaret's, whence the clashing and clanging and firing of the bells was scarcely music to those so near it as ourselves. The want of the morning seems rather everywhere to have been music; the mounted Royal band, gorgeous in red and gold, did strike up 'God save the Queen' as it passed us; but otherwise the general murmur of the crowd was all we heard, and no crowd was very near us, the paved path below St. Margaret's Stand being kept free for those arriving at the Abbey.

Amongst the earliest arrivals recognised were the young Princesses of Edinburgh, their pretty fair hair floating down their backs, their large flapping tuscan hats happily preventing the necessity of sunshades; they bowed very gravely and nicely, as if thoroughly well taught, and anxious to do their duty. The tall regal-looking Princess Frederica of Hanover alighted close to us, pale and fair, and looking every inch a princess, clothed from head to foot in white. The Duchess of Teck passed in one of the closed carriages —so disappointingly general in the two earlier processions—but kindly leant well forward showing bonnet and dress of reddish heliotrope. She is always a favourite, and was much cheered. If her daughter were with her she leant back, and only the two German Princes opposite were visible, one of them brown-eyed and dark haired where not bald, bowed with amused demeanour; the two sons of the Duchess were well visible in another carriage, and Prince Alfred of Edinburgh bowed well and constantly. Alas! all the crowned heads of Denmark, Greece, etc., were in closed carriages, and the King and Queen of the Belgians the same, and great murmurs of discontent arose. In 'Pall Mall East,' where was a close and cheerful crowd, the cry at once was 'Open the carriages.' Here the King of Denmark acknowledged the plaudits of the people by constantly kissing and waving his hand. The Indian Princes rode by wrapt around in all manner of rich dark colours, stolid and stately, beneath the burning sun, which made their jewels flash and flash again, and the Queen of Hawaii and the Princess Lilinokalani,

their black velvet dresses, crossed with the broad red ribbon of some order, acknowledged the cheers of the crowd but slightly. The dark pleasing Maharanee, with quiet Eastern grace and dignity, sat in an open carriage—regardless alike of the fierce noonday heat and of the sharp touch of north-east wind, with only a becoming white lace coiffure just tied under her chin. The young Prince of Japan, who sat alone facing the horses in a white low helmet-like cap, with bunches of magenta satin ribbon or feathers at its top, looked pleased and bowed, bright and amused. One felt proud of the quiet look of intellect and distinction on the faces and in the bearing of the English officers told off to attend upon these Eastern potentates.

It was growing late, and in fact it was 12.30 P.M. instead of noon, when the Queen's procession appeared winding down from Northumberland Avenue, heralded by the waving of handkerchiefs from those on the housetops, and the distant sounds of shouting. We tried to identify the Princess Irene of Hesse, and wondered if hers were the one blue dress in another carriage full of otherwise palest tints. The three young Princesses of Wales, looking a bower of soft tulle and general whiteness, were much cheered, the eldest with much of her mother's general contour, and their three aunts, Princess Christian, Princess Louise, and the Duchess of Edinburgh, made a charming carriageful, the refined intellectual profile and gracious pose of the Marchioness of Lorne especially catching one's eye. We did not know then that one hindering incident in the starting of the procession had been her husband's fall from his horse. The Queen's escort of princely sons and sons-in-law and grandsons, riding three abreast, came too closely one after the other to be seen well; but the magnificent figure of the Crown Prince seemed to crown the group as they went to the Abbey; and the Queen's own three sons riding abreast—the Prince of Wales' breast sparkling with his jewelled orders—as they came back; the Duke of Connaught to his left, bronzed and thinned from his Indian life; the Duke of Edinburgh, in a dark blue naval uniform. The dismounting of this escort under the awning at the western entrance to the Abbey was just out of sight to us, but it caused a perceptible pause, and stopped the Queen's carriage for a few minutes exactly in front of our stand; the Queen's new lace coronet-shaped bonnet of white lace, bedecked with diamonds, was a delightful surprise to the people, and wondrously becoming—making her look ten years younger than the small black poke in which she had entered town the previous day (so friends declared who had seen her then); and as she leant across the carriage to speak to the Princess Royal, one saw that her hair, though nearly white, was not scanty, and her cheeks still red and fresh from the cold breezes of Balmoral. She looked interested and pleased, the Crown Princess of Germany the same, and so unlike her sisters and sisters-in-law and general public in wearing her hair parted in the middle and put in two simple bands on each side like her mother's; even her

bonnet, white, with velvet bow and strings of a deep green olive, and pale grey silk dress, looked simple; later one saw in the papers that she and the Princess Christian had worn dresses cut off the same piece, and how magnificent in lace and embroidery they really were. It fell to the lot of the Princess of Wales to do the bowing whilst the carriage was thus arrested, and she sat as upright and slight and her head as beautifully placed upon her shoulders as ever, bowing and smiling with her own inimitable grace and sweetness; just that same enchanting and individual charm surrounding her as on the day she first landed four-and-twenty years ago—no doubt the very shape of her face has a perfection of form. Smiling and bowing in another quite individual way, the Duchess of Albany had already passed us, a bright dark warmly-coloured face, seeming to recognise friends in every one around her, and to be bowing always to some especial friend amongst the crowd; she was at once recognised—and her white parasol and slight mourning accepted as a compliment to the people and the day—and warmly cheered.

The white uniform of the Crown Prince of Austria identified his dark sagacious face even in a closed carriage: and I see the military helmet, covered with dark drooping green plumes, was worn by the Crown Prince of Sweden.

In choosing St. Margaret's Stand I had hoped that being so immediately beneath the shadow of the Abbey, some burst of thanksgiving song might at least have reached us from within the walls; but this was not the case, neither did the procession return in reverse order, as had been anticipated, except in part. Many great people were still leaving the Abbey as I passed by the western awnings into Dean's Yard, where a long string of carriages were waiting—Judges in wigs and ermine and scarlet robes amongst the occupants—waiting, apparently very patiently, until they could be allowed to pass out under the narrow archway; groups of Indians were mingled with æsthetically-clad ladies and Church dignitaries, and a crier was running along into Great College Street, crying, 'The Mayor of Margate,' 'The Mayor of Margate!' as if his worship were lost and his carriage blocking the way; we hoped he was found amongst some of the cloth and fur-robed magnates whom we passed. We hoped in vain that the Archbishops might have appeared at Canon Rowsell's (where they had robed and were to unrobe) in the magnificent robes they had worn within the Abbey.

And in Westminster what strange squalor lies close to the greatest splendour! Dean Stanley thinks it the remains of the motley company of outlaws, criminals, and political offenders, English and foreign, who in old days sought sanctuary in the Abbey. St. Giles does not produce dirtier and, alas! sometimes more depraved-looking men, women, and children. Some of these we met, even in that quiet old-world street I love, Great College Street, mingled with the late occupants of five-guineaed seats or Abbey stalls. Happily for

such there will be few stripes, for they have not known their Master's will.

It was a gay and mingled scene along the Embankment, wonderfully good coloured cards of the Queen being sold for one penny, and long opening rolls of portraits of all the Royal Family for fourpence; but the heat of the sun was overpowering, especially after the cool shadiness of our seats on the stand. The young trees of the Embankment were carefully protected by tarred and nailed wooden four-sided roof-like shields surrounding the whole circumference of the stems, about six feet from the ground. Up Northumberland Avenue the huge crowd was now roaming at pleasure, gentlemen in Court dress and splendid uniforms making their way through it to their hotels as best they could, and exciting much wonder and admiration. Not a cab was to be had or even seen, every Metropolitan station was besieged with a thick waiting 'tail,' every omnibus crowded, and announcing 'no penny fares to-day;' but good-humour and a certain order prevailing everywhere, nor was the crowd nearly so dense as when, the next night, a party of six, we mounted the top of a Bayswater omnibus at its starting-point, and drove to and from Ludgate Circus to see the illuminations, a three and a half hours' journey full of varied interest, and a delightfully cool height from which to survey the large wreath of green and purple thistle surrounding the Royal arms at Scott Adie's in Regent Street, Van de Eyde's 'All good Americans rejoice' upon the other side, the brilliant blaze of outlining gas at the rails of Charing Cross station, and the cool, refreshing, refined style of decoration adopted at 'The Graphic' offices—every window-sill filled with boxes of plants of red and white geraniums—the electric light, or rather various coloured lime lights, thrown from the roof of the south aisle of St. Clement's Danes' Church upon the statue of the Queen at the top of the offices of the 'Illustrated London News,' every now and then catching the flowers in their brighter beams.

Perhaps the most singular decorative illumination was in Ludgate Circus: 'King Lud rejoices in Queen Victoria's Jubilee.' And one stray electric beam from somewhere suddenly illuminated the dome of St. Paul's over the railway bridge. Our driver gave up the attempt to penetrate further eastward, our détours having been so many, as up Chancery Lane and through Covent Garden, and down past the Lyceum—so much on the level of the decorations of its gas-wreathed columns that their warmth was most perceptible—back into our main road, etc., the good-humour and peaceableness of the crowd below always remarkable. Equally singular the lack of life in the windows above the roadways, proving how completely the heart of London is deserted in the night, not above three windows, with a head or two at each, was there opened all around our route to watch the wondrous crowd below. The beautiful evergreen wreathings between the Venetian masts at the junction of Pall

Mall and Trafalgar Square, and across St. James's Street, are well known, and I will content myself with recording one or two original or special inscriptions which struck me by the way. 'Sons of toil, England's wealth,' as the starting-point; 'The Lord bless thee and keep thee,' 'The Lord make His face to shine upon thee,' opposite old Waterloo House; 'We wish every good Monarch a Jubilee,' in Hammersmith. We ended our long, but most interesting, day in wishing that every long-suffering policeman, cab horse, and omnibus conductor and driver could have the last week of June as a Jubilee holiday week—it would have been well earned; and we found all the London Board and Elementary Schools were rejoicing in the present week as such. Hearing some happy expectant children practising 'God save the Queen' and 'Rule Britannia,' in preparation for their share in the children's fête in Hyde Park, had been our beginning of this Wednesday, June 22nd. Its afternoon was somewhat wasted in the vain attempt to catch anything more than the most distant view of their pleasure through the deep outer encircling ring of sward and safety, whilst so dense was the crowd of sightseers, and loungers, and holiday makers of all classes in the park, that only the tops of the Queen's and Princesses' white parasols were visible, and the fine physique of the Indian Princes, and the Duke of Cambridge, as they swept by on their way to take their part in that fête's proceedings. How lovely and how green Hyde Park was looking, if the beauties of its rhododendrons were just fading in the unwontedly fierce June sun! Another halfhour and the Queen was on her way to Windsor, and we making our way home by a most devious route of railways, all ordinary traffic by the Marble Arch stopped, and the streets and parks still full of sightseers. And I think for once the English were not taking their pleasure sadly, but were delighted, interested, amused with wondrous little.

'You'll never see the Queen after all; but I'll tell you when she's coming, and take off your hats and cheer!' said a middle-class, kindly father to three dear little lads, encircled by the crowd, awaiting Her Majesty's approach to the children's fête, and they did so, seemingly quite satisfied with their lot in the day's chief event. Indeed, upon both June 21st and 22nd, we were often mentally reminded of Leech's clever, yet saddening picture, 'Come, Hisabellar, come; we can see the 'oofs of the 'orses!' (children looking between the tent pegs of a travelling circus); and had felt it our own lot—and a fair one to be also tested even by five guinea seat-holders—when all we had seen of the foreign monarchs-regnant on their way to or from the Abbey, had been the dust on the roof of their carriages. And so farewell to one view of the Jubilee, June, 1887.

Since then I have heard of ten guineas being asked for each of the four last remaining seats to be had at Waterloo House, of one and a half hour's stoppage and carriage block in Berkeley Square, of five and a half guineas asked and given for a cab to convey a husband

and wife some two miles to and from the Abbey, of twelve persons crowding the top of another cab at a shilling a head and surveying the procession thence, of ladies and gentlemen sleeping on the seats of the Embankment provided with etnas whence to make their morning cups of tea, etc. etc., but never of one quarrel or rough word or evil deed. For that one day Peace and Goodwill did really seem to reign in our huge metropolis, and one learns now not only there but throughout the Queen's dominions.

'And so the Earth won back a Sabbath from the World.'

A. C. D.

THE CENTENARY OF THE COLONIAL CHURCH.

THERE is something in what is new and progressive, which appeals to the young, just as what is ancient, and has had a long continuous history, has, perhaps, a special attraction for those of maturer years. It may be, then, that a short paper on the first century of the Colonial Church may be acceptable to the 'younger members of the Church of England,' whom the 'Monthly Packet' has been ever forward to interest in all current Church topics.

I. The first point that claims attention is the marvellous growth of the Colonial Church within so comparatively short a time as one hundred years. The first Colonial Diocese was Nova Scotia, to which Dr. Inglis was consecrated on August 12th, 1787. Within the following one hundred years nearly eighty new dioceses have been formed, exhibiting manifold variety in extent, endowment, conditions, locality, climate, fitly suggestive of the catholicity of the Church's work. There is a good deal to remind us, when thinking of the Colonial Church, its origin and extension, of the American Church, which sprang into life only three years earlier, in 1784, when Bishop Seabury was consecrated in Aberdeen as first Prelate of Connecticut, and of the American Church. In both cases how truly can it be said, 'how has a little one become a thousand,' and the reflection should well serve to confirm not only our loyal attachment to the Church of England as the Church of our baptism, but also our faith in her inherent vitality, as a living branch of the one Holy Catholic Church of which she has given such abundant proof in the thriving daughter churches in all lands, which, tracing their spiritual descent to her as the Mother Church, arise and call her blessed. The words of the old classic, so aptly used by the Bishop of St. Andrews at the Seabury Centenary of the Scottish Church, as contemplating her numerous offspring in the striking development of the American Church, apply with equal force to the survey of the Colonial mission-field from the vantage ground of this nineteenth-century anniversary, from within the borders of the old National Church of the land:

'*Quinquaginta illi thalami; spes tanta nepotum.*'

II. But while there is so much cause for thankfulness in recording so much spiritual and material progress, it is well before being generous to be just; and the candour which ought to characterise every page of history, compels us to admit, that, at first, there was but a tardy recognition by England of her duty to provide such spiritual ministrations as would fairly keep pace with her acquisition

of Colonial territory. The acceleration of interest and the facility of methods of later times may possibly prevent our realising to the full, the apathy which in earlier days was content to move slowly, and to accept, more or less in the spirit of compromise, the obstacles, whether real or imaginary, which were said to hinder the uninterrupted growth, nay, the first inauguration of the Colonial Church as organised bodies. So it came to pass, that individual groups of missions, here and there, were working abroad, as best they could, long before the Colonial Episcopate was inaugurated in 1787. And this is important. For a Bishop is not only an overseer, he is a pioneer of Church work; and a source and centre for imparting that life by which the Church lives and grows. It is, then, of paramount importance, that every one of us, in our generation, use every endeavour, seize every occasion, of promoting and fostering Church work, within, around, at home and abroad.

III. The expansion of the Colonial Church, in dioceses, took the following order, as regards different parts of the world:—

1. Canada (Nova Scotia), 1787.
2. India (Calcutta), 1814.
3. West Indies (Jamaica), 1824.
4. Australia (Australia, now Sydney), 1836.
5. New Zealand (New Zealand, now Auckland), 1841.
6. South Africa (Capetown), 1847.

*Syria (Jerusalem), 1841.
*Mediterranean (Gibraltar), 1842.
*China (Victoria), 1849.
*China, North, 1872.
*China, Mid, 1880.
*Sierra Leone, 1852.
*Mauritius, 1854.
*Singapore, 1855.
*Honolulu, 1861.
*Central Africa, 1861.
*Niger Territory, 1864.
*Falkland Isles, 1869.
*Madagascar, 1874.
*Japan, 1883.
*Eastern Equatorial Africa, 1884.

IV. The separate development of each Section is as follows:—

1. CANADA.—The single diocese of Nova Scotia, founded in 1787, had become nineteen sees in 1879, with the prospect of further subdivision.

a. Nova Scotia, 1787.
b. Quebec, 1793.
c. Toronto, 1839.
d. Newfoundland, 1839.
e. Fredericton, 1845.
f. Rupertsland, 1849.
g. Montreal, 1850.
h. Huron, 1857.
i. Columbia, 1859.
j. Ontario, 1862.
k. Moosonee, 1872.
l. Algoma, 1873.
m. Mackenzie River, 1874.
n. Saskatchewan, 1874.
o. Niagara, 1875.
p. Caledonia, 1879.
q. New Westminster, 1879.
r. Qu 'Appelle, 1884.
s. Athabasca, 1884.

2. INDIA.

a. Calcutta, 1814.
b. Madras, 1835.
c. Bombay, 1837.
d. Colombo, 1845.
e. Lahore, 1877.
f. Rangoon, 1877.
g. Travancore and Cochin, 1879.

3. West Indies.

a. Jamaica, 1824.
b. Barbadoes, 1824.
c. Guiana, 1842.
d. Antigua, 1842.
e. Nassau, 1861.
f. Trinidad, 1872.
g. Windward Isles, 1878.
h. Honduras, 1883.

4. Australia.

a. Sydney (formerly Australia), 1836.
b. Tasmania, 1842.
c. Newcastle, 1847.
d. Melbourne, 1847.
e. Adelaide, 1847.
f. Perth, 1856.
g. Brisbane, 1859.
h. Goulbourn, 1863.
i. Grafton and Armidale, 1866.
j. Bathurst, 1869.
k. Ballarat, 1875.
l. North Queensland, 1878.
m. Riverina, 1884.

5. New Zealand.

a. Auckland (formerly New Zealand), 1841.
b. Christchurch, 1856.
c. Nelson, 1858.
d. Waiapu, 1858.
e. Wellington, 1858.
f. Melanesia, 1861.
g. Dunedin, 1866.

6. South Africa.

a. Capetown, 1847.
b. Grahamstown, 1853.
c. St. Helena, 1859.
d. Bloemfontein, 1863.
e. Maritzburg, 1869.
f. Zululand, 1870.
g. St. John's, Kaffraria, 1873.
h. Pretoria, 1878.

V. Summary.—It will thus be seen that besides the fifteen dioceses, marked with an asterisk, which hold mission or authority direct from the Metropolitan See of Canterbury—there are six independent organised Ecclesiastical Provinces in every quarter of the globe, which on closer examination are found to be eight, inasmuch as the Canadian Church not only includes the Province of Canada proper, but also the two Provinces of Rupertsland (with its Suffragan Sees of Qu'Appelle, Moosonee, Mackenzie River, Saskatchewan, and Athabasca) and Columbia (with its Suffragan Sees of Caledonia and New Westminster), erected in 1875 and 1879 respectively.

VI. The conclusion is necessarily forced upon every attentive reader of such a record of work done, that God's blessing has very largely rested upon His Church, and that men and money must have been forthcoming, more than at first sight may seem apparent. We turn, then, to the Reports of the great Missionary Societies, and feel how great a debt is owing to their silent but continuous work. The financial machinery necessary to keep so many Colonial dioceses at work, has been in great measure supplied by such agencies as the Colonial Bishoprics Fund, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, and the Church Missionary, and Colonial and Continental, and South American Mission Societies. In many cases, the money granted annually has been withdrawn, as the principle of self-help has

developed, and the infant sees grew up to maturity and were able to take care of themselves. In other cases, State endowments have been withdrawn by Government, and there seems little doubt that existing subsidies will, before long, cease to come from the mother-country, which, although the change may at first press heavily, is thus acknowledging the ample proportions, the stability and independence of the daughter churches. In further instances, the endowments have been due to private benevolence, as in the cases of the Dioceses of Columbia and Adelaide, founded by Lady Burdett-Coutts, and Riverina, founded by one of the merchant princes of Australia, the Hon. John Campbell, lately deceased.

VII. One hardly realises, amidst so many facts of developed life, how manifold are the scenes of Church work they collectively represent. The one Vineyard of Christ's Church in the fields abroad, white already to harvest, presents well-nigh endless variety. And such variety offers what would specially suit different tastes and temperaments. Speaking generally, there is an invigorating freshness about Colonial Church work, which compares favourably, with the somewhat monotonous routine of English parish work, and hardly any one could spend even a few years of his life abroad, without receiving new impulses, adapting new impressions, and being the better for it every way. Things are apt to run in ruts more in an old established Church, venerable from age and association, and which has entwined itself deep in the hearts and affections of the nation, as the veteran yew-tree has implanted its spreading roots firmly into the soil beneath the churchyard grass; but abroad, while the message and main methods of the work remain unchanged, the conditions and circumstances of the work are multiform; and there is more active scope for the energies and enthusiasm, which in many cases is drawn out to better advantage, by taking up new work, or rather labouring in fresh fields, rather than by carrying on a work begun and handed down by others centuries ago. In this way Colonial work appeals more to the young than to the old, whether men or women. Apart from this view of the work in its nature, its developments exhibit all the old features of home, together with some new ones. There are the stately cities of Australia and New Zealand, as well as the wide and scattered bush parishes; there are to be found the well ordered Cathedrals, such as Adelaide, Sydney, Zanzibar, Calcutta, as well as the humble mission chapels, in Canada or the Transvaal. Missions, Brotherhoods, Sisters, are found in every quarter, and the best sons of the Church are sought for the work. There is a freedom and elasticity inseparable from the subject which has a charm for many. Hardly a diocese abroad but has its regular Synod—a thing not yet realised at home saving in Ireland and Scotland—and this, whether the clergy be many or few. Perhaps no better example of this could be found than the Diocese of Bloemfontein, which shows the true relation of a Cathedral to the Bishop and the diocese, and might well

be copied elsewhere as regards constitutional action. Indeed, the whole of the South African Church, which has gone through some tribulation, is a daughter of which the mother may well be proud.

VIII. Turning for a moment to the roll of names furnished by the period under notice, one is struck by the solid worth and eminence of many of them, as well for intellectual gifts, as for the devotion and apostolic zeal they have shown. Whether we recall the memory of Selwyn of Australia, Patteson of Melanesia, Cotton of Calcutta, Feild of Newfoundland, Gray of Capetown, Barry of Sydney, Venables of Nassau, Austin of Guiana, Short of Adelaide, Tyrell of Newcastle, Binney of Nova Scotia, Douglas of Bombay, Medley of Fredericton, Hannington of East Equatorial Africa, amongst many others, we recognise the good hand of our God upon His Church, and we are conscious of the lustre they have shed on the Colonial Church in many ways. Men of ripe scholarship, good family, manifold resource, they have given themselves to the Church's work abroad, and impel others by the sheer force of their own bright example. How inspiriting it is to know of Bishop Gray's courage in the Colenso difficulty, how refreshing in times of restless change to know that Bishop Short, of Adelaide, stuck to his post in Australia for forty years before allowing himself a trip to England, and to check one's one love of easy-going ways, by reflecting on Bishop Tyrrell's daily time table, which was as follows: rose at 4, devotions 5—6; divinity 6—8; breakfast 8—9; divinity 9—11; diocese 11—2; dinner and exercise 2—6; diocese 6—9; devotions 9—10; rest 10—4. And yet this was the man whose diocese is a monument of his own marvellous powers of organisation and careful foresight, as he provided substantial funds for clergy, church building, and nearly every possible diocesan need.

IX. Meanwhile, one reads that the S. P. G. contributions are some £2000 less this year than last, and invidious remarks are passed, and comparisons made between the two great Church Missionary Societies; and in the face of it, one cannot help feeling how great a gain and benefit would accrue to the Church as a whole, if the shibboleths of party societies, however much or how honestly they may be disowned, were once and for ever done away, and all Foreign Missions were managed and supported, as in France, as in Scotland, as in America, by a central Board, which should be the Church herself acting, and not societies within the Church. The true conception of the Church, as the great Missionary agent, would then be felt as a greater reality, and the principle being thus clearly apparent, funds would flow in more freely, than by societies representing different religious schools. People want to be taught and reminded of what they too often seem to forget, that Missions are not an accident, but the very essence of a living Church, that the work is all one, though seen in different stages of development, whether in the case of an old established Church, as of England, or of a young nascent diocese, just struggling into corporate life. Souls have either to be built up, or brought to Christ,

and all appeals for missions will fail or be successful, as this aspect of the Church is obscured or made plain. The support of Foreign Missions then is removed at once from the list of things one may take up or not, as he pleases, and becomes both a privilege and a solemn duty, for the most settled home diocese was once a mission, just as the latest formed so-called missionary see, in time emerges from its initial stage, and becomes a settled diocese. Such at least is taught us by the history of Nova Scotia, with which this paper commenced.

X. Two Pan-Anglican Conferences have been held; and one cannot but hope that the next one, due in 1888, and following so closely after the Colonial Church Centenary, will be productive of the best results. One of such results, much to be desired, would be the establishment on a firm basis, supported by the whole bench of Colonial Bishops, of a periodical devoted wholly to the interests of the Church abroad.

D. J. MACKEY, M.A.

DEBATABLE GROUND.

Supplementary remarks and criticisms on previous debates, and on the manner in which they have been conducted.

No supplementary remarks on the subject-matter of the debates have reached Chelsea China; but she has received one or two severe criticisms on the *manner* in which they have been conducted.

The upshot of these communications appears to be that the debaters don't keep to the point in debate, and that she herself either offers them no point to keep to, or at any rate comes to no definite conclusion upon it.

Now the 'Monthly Packet' itself, to say nothing of Chelsea China, does not set up to decide all the difficult questions that may come under discussion, and to do so is not the object of Debatable Ground.

But with regard to the working of the questions or subjects, the difficulty of so stating them, as to give two sides capable of reasonable support, and to make them at once definite and inclusive, is extremely great; and they cannot be put in the bald form usual in Debating Societies—where people are told off to one side or another to make a debate—because people will not support in *writing* views which they do not really hold. Every care is, however, taken to make the questions as clear as possible.

And as to the answers, correspondents are entreated to keep clear of general and incontrovertible observations, and to try to express their opinions as definitely as possible. It has not been found practicable to allow the debate to extend through more than one number as a whole, as several correspondents have suggested; but if any one wishes to controvert the summing up, or 'desires to join into a subject *after* reading the answers,' and not before, space will be found for such supplementary remarks in the next number. It is hoped that the spirit of contradiction will thus have fair play.

For the next debate, Chelsea China, with the approval of the Editor, suggests the subject of a debate recently held at Newnham College, the slight difference in the wording being necessary to give the form of a question, not of a motion.

Is Hero worship injurious either to the worshipped or the worshipper?

Answers to be sent to Chelsea China, care of the Publisher, before the 1st of September.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

History of Rome.

Questions for August.

29. Describe the Battle of Pydna, and the Triumph of Paullus.

30. Enumerate the Provinces of the Roman Empire in B.C. 132, with a brief account of their forms of administration.

31. Comment on the prevalence and social effects of slavery among the Romans.

32. Write short notes on the following: Novus Homo—Nobilis—Jus imaginum.

February Class List.

First Class.

Speranza 36	Grasshopper, Tortoise, Chrysé 31
Wylmecote, Lachesis 35	Rags, Kat, Repullulat, C. Minor 30
White Cat, Lisle 33	

Second Class.

Water-wagtail, Atropos, Clotho, Vorwärts, Woodpecker 29	Glaucia, Madge Wildfire, Mollusk, Horatius, Terpsichore, Robin 23
Bluebell, Charissa 28	Elpis, Budgerigar, Livy, Portia (Ealing), Carlotta, C Major 22
Fidelia, Sophonisba 27	
Marius, Deryn, Countess 26	
Romola 25	Charlemagne, Fieldfare, Antwortende 21
Claudia, Edelweiss 24	
Spearmaid, Lille Fröken, Carlo 23	Neæra, Emu, Portia 20

Third Class.

Lily	19	Mabel, Wood-violet	15
Rosebud	15	Daddy Darwin	13

March Class List.

First Class.

Moonraker	37	Chrysé	—
Vorwärts, Grasshopper	36	Speranza, Fidelia, Woodpecker, Bluebell, Deryn	31
Lisle	35		
C Minor	34		
Lachesis	33		
Wylmecote, Budgerigar, Tortoise, Robin	32	White Cat, Water-wagtail, Kat, Rags, Charissa	30

Second Class.

C Major, Terpsichore, Midge, Clotho	29	Carlo, Horatius, Atropos	25
Eve, Tacitus, Livy	27	Lily	24
Romola, Spearmaid, Edelweiss, Mabel, Marius, Repullulat	26	Stanzerl	23
		Neæra	22
		Carlotto	21
		Emu, Glaucia	20

Third Class.

Charlemagne	19	Antwortende, Portia, Fieldfare, Claudia, Zugvogel, Elpis	16
Madge Wildfire, Lille Fröken	18		
Mollusk, Portia (Ealing), Countess	17		
		Daddy Darwin	12
		Guy	11

REMARKS.

5. The principal grievances of the Plebeians were the denial of the right of intermarriage with the Patricians (afterwards conceded by the passing of the Canulcian Law, B.C. 445), their exclusion from all share in the Ager Publicus, and the severe laws against debtors.

Vorwärts, Fieldfare, Neæra, and others, omit the first and second points. C Major mistakes the Comitia Centuriata for the Comitia Curiata. Spearmaid mistakes *imperium* for *intercessio*. Grasshopper:

the law limiting interest to ten per cent. formed part of the Twelve Tables, which were not promulgated till 450 B.C.

Daddy Darwin mistakes the First Secession of the Plebeians for the Second, which was in B.C. 449.

6. Marius: Valeria was not the wife, but the sister of Valerius Poplicola. Edelweiss: Corioli was a city of Latium, not of Etruria. Fieldfare: it was Gelo of Syracuse who sent the corn to Rome, not Dionysius, who lived a hundred years later.

7. The general result of the rise and fall of the Decemvirate was favourable to the Plebeians in the following particulars: (1) the possession of a written code of laws, in place of traditional customs and arbitrary decrees; (2) the right of appeal against the decision of the supreme magistrate to the people in the Centuriate Assembly; (3) the legislative powers conferred upon the Comitia Tributa, and binding upon the whole State. Rags, Repullulat, and a few others, state the three points correctly.

Antwortende and Wood-violet: this question cannot be properly answered by a brief paragraph, consisting of two sentences only.

8. It should be clearly stated that the name Populus Romanus originally signified the three ancient (patrician) tribes only, but was extended to the Plebeians after the reforms of B.C. 449.

C Major: *populus* is not derived from *popularі;* but, on the contrary, *popularі* is derived from *populus*, and means 'to pour a multitude over a country,' and, hence, to 'lay it waste.' Privilegium means a private law, or enactment concerning a single citizen, whether favourable or the reverse. Claudia and Portia confuse Privilegium with Prærogativa, which was a term applied to the tribe or century holding the right (determined by lot) of voting first in the Assembly.

9. Antwortende and Claudia: the Alban Lake is twelve miles south of Rome, in Latium, while Veii was twelve miles north of Rome, in Etruria, with the Tiber flowing between; it is impossible, therefore, that Camillus should have proposed to undermine the city from the *same* tunnel that drained the surplus waters of the lake. Students should consult the map before writing their answers. Neither did the mine, or underground passage, start 'from Rome' (as Spearmaid thinks), but from the Roman camp before Veii.

10. The Celts, one of the families of the great Aryan or Indo-European Stock, were divided into two branches, Gael, who inhabited the country anciently called Gaul, as well as Ireland and the Highlands of Scotland; and the Cymri, Cimmerians, or Cumbrians, who inhabited Britain and Belgica. It was the Gael, or Gauls, who came down into northern Italy in early times, and finally crossed the Apennines, B.C. 390.

Glaucia says, Brennus promised to leave Rome 'for a thousand *francs!*' Such a blunder is really too ridiculous to be gravely corrected.

Atropos gives no particulars of the invasion.

11. The Licinian Laws effected a real measure of reform, though the second (agrarian) was frequently evaded by legal fictions, which enabled rich men to occupy more than the appointed share of public land; and the third (political) was counter-balanced by the creation of the patrician office of Prætor, with judicial functions taken from the Consuls.

Water-wagtail: the 'Military Tribunes with Consular power' were six in number, not two. Moonraker, Bluebell, Kat, and others, omit the fourth law, which substituted the Decemviri Sacrorum, five patrician, and five plebeian, for the patrician Duumviri.

Many students do not seem to understand that a Rogation became a Law, as soon as it was passed, just as a Bill becomes an Act of Parliament, under the same circumstances.

12. A Roman citizen usually had three names, *prænomen*, *nomen*, *cognomen*, the first being his own personal name, given on the ninth day after birth, at a festival called *nominalia*; the second the name of his gens or clan; the third that of his family or house. But he might also have an *agnomen*, or surname, derived from some honourable achievement. Thus Publius Cornelius Scipio Africanus was Publius of the Scipio family of the Cornelii, surnamed Africanus after the Battle of Zama. If adopted into another gens, a Roman retained the name of his own native gens in its adjectival form, as Octavianus, Æmilianus.

The following have unfortunately misunderstood the question, and can therefore gain no marks for their answers: Claudia, Emu, Mollusk, Fieldfare, Portia, Guy, Charlemagne, Portia (Ealing), Countess, Antwortende, Madge Wildfire.

Countess is requested to use ruled paper, as her writing is too crowded to be legible.

Note.—The prize-winners in the Grecian History Competition of 1887, are, first, Miss Charlotte Compton (Moonraker), Minstead Parsonage, Lyndhurst; second, Miss Ball (Speranza), Marston Sicca, Stratford-on-Avon; third, Miss Bealey (Water-wagtail), Oak Lea, Harrogate; fourth, Miss Agnes W. Huntingford (Bluebell), Barnwell Rectory, Oundle.

Notices to Correspondents.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE 'MONTHLY PACKET.'

DEAR MADAM,

Can you find space in your next Notice of Books for a warning against *The Story of an African Farm.*

It has been mentioned with high praise in one of the Monthly Reviews, by a popular novelist, Mr. Rider Haggard, and has reached a second edition. The story is told with force and fervour; it is written with a didactic purpose; and its teaching is blank Atheism.

A boy and girl, neighbours, are brought up among uncongenial surroundings, and endure great wrongs. The girl contrives to obtain education, becomes an 'emancipated woman' of the most 'advanced' type—loves, but refuses marriage as too permanent a tie; and after the death of her babe, is nursed till her own death by her rejected lover disguised in woman's clothes; a most piteous and painful narration, but without a hint given that her views of life were wrong. Her early companion and friend, the boy, passes a devout infancy under the care of a pious and simple-hearted father; then proves by experience the uselessness of prayer; sees around him the triumph of fraud, ingratitude, and hideous cruelty; suffers agonies as every shred of faith drops gradually from his soul; after years of desolation and despair, emerges gradually into the calm daylight of entire unbelief; after losing all human that he loves, satisfies his soul wholly with the study of nature, the only Divine; and dies at last a silent and peaceful death in the sunshine.

Verses of the most sacred hymns, and texts of Scripture, are placed in the mouth of the most wicked persons; the stock difficulties of the Bible are all brought forward, and every doubt and perplexity suggested by 'the riddle of the painful earth,' is driven home to the soul.

No reading can be imagined more dangerous to the young and unsettled; the more so that it seems to be written from the heart, and if your powerful influence can keep the book out of the hands of some, at least, of your readers, I cannot but think it will be worthily exercised.

I am, dear Madam,

Yours faithfully,

W. L. B.

J. L. H. would be very glad if any of the readers of the 'Monthly Packet' could tell her who was the original author of the lines beginning,

'Within that awful volume lies
* * * * *
And better had they ne'er been born,
Who read to doubt, or read to scorn.'

The 'White Lady' in Sir Walter Scott's 'Monastery' uses them, but in an old Bible *J. L. H.* finds them written, and Byron's name as the composer. A third authority thinks they were written in Byron's Bible, but whether his own or not, she thinks is not mentioned. It seems rather strange that Sir Walter Scott should mix them up in his novel without acknowledging the author. Page 163, vol. 18, of the original Waverley edition.

As the 'Monastery' was published in 1820, and Byron died in 1824, he probably copied the lines into his Bible. This is far more likely than that Scott should have pirated them.

The Sisters of St. Saviour's Priory thankfully acknowledge a parcel from Mrs. Vaughan, Fernhill.

Will some one kindly lend me Lord Tennyson's 'Locksley Hall, Sixty Years After,' for a few days? I will gladly pay the postage.—M. H., Brightling Rectory, Hawkhurst.

A QUESTION.

What is that mood into which we are sometimes drifting, and which seems to take possession of our hearts and minds with a strange, sweet, magical power peculiarly its own? It comes on us quite suddenly, it gives no sign, no warning, but we know it by the peaceful glow which is then shining in our hearts. Nothing outward can give it to us, nor can anything take it away. What shall I call it? Content? or pleasure? hopefulness? or peace? It comes at any time, perhaps at some uneventful passage of our daily lives, with such a tender radiance, that all discord, for the time being, is struck out of our lives, and harmony seems to reign within us and around us. Not the sight of our dearest friends can make us feel this, not the fulfilment of some great noble action can bestow it, nor the restful feeling of a blessing gained. How shall I describe it? How find words to make my meaning plain?

* * * * * *

Can it not be a twilight glory of the other world? an echo of the heavenly harmonies that never cease, although so often we will not hear them. All through our life, in the midst of care and toil and trouble and worldly thoughts, which we must have here below, I

think there runs a golden thread of higher, better things, a link uniting earth and heaven; not apart from earthly subjects, mixing with them rather, and yet flowing onwards through them all. When we grasp its golden meaning, when we *feel* it in our hearts, then it is we have this soothing feeling, only then it seems to me, in our spirit this holy joy is planted; if we would only let it bloom and flourish, in the midst of all our earthly life, perhaps an echo would be always given us, just an echo of the joy in Heaven.—N. I. P.

ERRATA.

A GEORGE HERBERT OF THE NINETEETH CENTURY.

Page 575 *for* "Melford Haven" *read* "Milford Haven."
„ 576 „ "Swanton" „ "Stranton."
„ 579 „ "*matandis*" „ "*mutandis*."

The Author is informed that although the late Father Faber was a friend of Birkett's at Durham, he was never at the Grammar School there.

The Monthly Packet.

SEPTEMBER, 1887.

BEECHCROFT AT ROCKSTONE.

BY THE EDITOR.

CHAPTER IX.

GAUGING AJEE.

WITHOUT exactly practising to deceive, Gillian began to find that concealment involved her in a tangled web; all the more since Aunt Jane had become thoroughly interested in the Whites, and was inquiring right and left about schools and scholarships for the little boys.

She asked their master about them, and heard that they were among his best scholars, and that their home lessons had always been carefully attended to by their elder brother and sister. In fact, he was most anxious to retain Theodore, to be trained for a pupil teacher, the best testimony to his value! Aunt Jane came home full of the subject, relating what the master said of Alexis White, and that he had begun by working with him at Latin and mathematics; but that they had not had time to go on with what needed so much study and preparation.

'In fact,' said Miss Mohun, 'I have a suspicion that if a certificated schoolmaster could own any such thing, the pupil knew more than the teacher. When your father comes home, I hope he will find some way of helping that lad.'

Gillian began to crimson, but bethought herself of the grandeur of its being found that she was the youth's helper. 'I am glad you have been lending him books,' added Aunt Jane.

What business had she to know what had not been told her? The sense of offence drove back any disposition to consult her. Yet to teach Alexis was no slight task, for though he had not gone far in Greek, his inquiries were searching, and explaining to him was a different thing from satisfying even Mr. Pollock. Besides, Gillian had her own studies on hand. The Cambridge examinations were beginning to assume larger proportions in the Rockquay mind,

and 'the General Screw Company,' as Mr. Grant observed, was prevailing.

Gillian's knowledge was rather discursive, and the concentration required by an examination was hard work to her, and the time for it was shortened by the necessity of doing all Alexis's Greek exercises and translations beforehand, and of being able to satisfy him why an error was not right, for, in all politeness, he always would know why it did not *look* right. And there was Valetta, twisting and groaning. The screw was on her form, who, unless especially exempted, were to compete for a prize for language examination.

Valetta had begun by despising Kitty Varley for being excepted by her mother's desire, and for not learning Latin, but now she envied any one who had not to work double tides at the book of Cæsar that was to be taken up, and Vercingetorix and his Arverni got vituperated in a way that would have made the hair of her hero-worshipping mother fairly stand on end.

But then Lilias Mohun had studied him for love of himself, not for dread of failure.

Gillian had been displeased when Fergus deserted her for Aunt Jane, as an assistant, but she would not have been sorry if Valetta had been off her hands, when it was interrupted in researches after an idiom in St. John's Gospel by the sigh that 'this abominable dictionary had no verb *obeo*,' or in the intricacies of a double equation by despair at this horrid Cæsar always hiding away his nominatives out of spite.

Valetta, like the American child, evidently regarded the Great Julius in no other light than as writer of a book for beginners in Latin, and, moreover, a very unkind one; and she fully reciprocated the sentiment that it was no wonder that the Romans conquered the world, since they knew the Latin grammar by nature.

Nor was Gillian's hasty and some times petulant assistance very satisfactory to the poor child, since it often involved hearing, 'Wait a minute,' and a very long one. 'How can you be so stupid?' 'I told you so long ago,' and sometimes consisted of a gabbling translation, with rapidly pointed finger, very hard to follow, and not quite so painstaking as when Alexis deferentially and politely pointed out the difficulties, with a strong sense of the favour that she was doing him.

Not that these personal lessons often took place, Kalliope never permitted them without dire necessity, and besides, there was always an uncertainty when Gillian might come down, or when Alexis might be able to come in.

One day when Aunt Jane had come home with a story of how one of her 'business girls' had confessed to Miss White's counsel having only just saved her from an act of folly, it occurred to Aunt Adeline to say—

'It is a great pity you have not her help in the G. F. S.'

'I did not understand enough about her before, and mixed her up with the ordinary class of business girls. I had rather have her a member for the sake of example; but if not, she would be a valuable associate. Could not you explain this to her, without hurting her feelings, as I am afraid I did to her, Gill. I do not understand enough about her when I spoke to her before.'

Gillian started. The conversation that should have been so pleasant to her was making her strangely uncomfortable.

'I do not see how Gill is to get at her,' objected the other aunt. 'It would be of no great use to call on her in the nest of the Queen of the White Ants. I can't help recollecting the name, it was so descriptive.'

'Yes; it was on her mother's account that she refused, and of course her office must not be invaded in business hours.'

'I might call on her there before she goes home,' suggested Gillian, seeing daylight.

'You cannot be walking down there at dusk, just as the workmen come away,' exclaimed Aunt Ada, making the colour so rush into Gillian's cheeks that she was glad to catch up a screen.

'No,' said Miss Mohun emphatically; 'but I could leave her there at five o'clock, and go to Tideshole to take old Jemmy Burnet his jersey, and call for her on the way back.'

'Or she could walk home with me,' murmured the voice behind the screen.

Gillian felt with dismay that all these precautions as to her escort would render her friend more scrupulous than ever as to her visits. To have said, 'I have several times been at the office,' would have been a happy clearance of the ground, but her pride would not bend to possible blame, nor would she run the risk of a prohibition. 'It would be the ruin of hope to Alexis, and mamma knows all,' said she to herself.

It was decided that she should trust to Kalliope to go back with her, since when once Aunt Jane got into the very fishy hamlet of Tideshole, which lay beyond the quarries, there was no knowing when she might get away since,

> 'Alike to her were time and tide,
> November's snow or July's pride.'

So after a few days, too wet and tempestuous for any expedition, they set forth, accompanied by Fergus, who rushed in from school in time to treat his aunt as a peripatetic 'Joyce's scientific dialogues.' Valetta had not arrived, and Gillian was in haste to elude her knowing that her aunt would certainly not take her on to Tideshole, and that there would be no comfort in talking before her; but it was a new thing to have to regard her little sister in the light of a spy, and again she had to reason down a sense of guiltiness. However, her aunt wanted Valetta as little as she did; and she had never so rejoiced in Fergus's

monologue, 'Then this small fly-wheel catches into the large one, and so—— Don't you see?'—only pausing for a sound of assent.

Unacquainted with the private door, Miss Mohun entered the office through the show-room, exchanging greetings with the young saleswomen, and finding Miss White putting away her materials.

Shaking hands, Miss Mohun said—

'I have brought your friend to make a visit to you while I go on to Tideshole. She tells me that you will be kind enough to see her on her way home, if you are going back at the same time.'

'I shall be delighted,' said Kalliope, with eyes as well as tongue, and no sooner were she and Gillian alone together than she joyfully exclaimed—

'Then Miss Mohun knows! You have told her.'

'No——'

'Oh!' and there were volumes in the intonation. 'I was alarmed when she came in, and then so glad if it was all over. Dear Miss Merrifield——'

'Call me Gillian, I have told you to do so before! Phyllis is Miss Merrifield, and I *won't* be so before my time,' said Gillian, interrupting in a tone more cross than affectionate.

'I was going to say,' pursued Kalliope, 'that the shock her entrance gave to me proved all the more that we cannot be treating her properly.'

'Never mind that! I did not come about that. She is quite taken with you, Kally, and wants you more than ever to be a Friendly Girl, because she thinks it would be so good for the others who are under you.'

'They have told me something about it,' said Kalliope thoughtfully.

'She fancied,' added Gillian, 'that perhaps she did not make you understand the rights of it, not knowing that you were different from the others.'

'Oh no, it was not that,' said Kalliope. 'Indeed, I hope there is no such nonsense in me. It was what my dear father always warned us against, only poor mamma always gets vexed if she does not think we are keeping ourselves up, and she had just been annoyed at —something, and we did not know then that it was Lady Merrifield's sister.'

This was contradictory, but it was evident that, while Kalliope disowned conceit of station for herself, she could not always cross her mother's wishes. It was further elicited that if Lady Flight had taken up the matter there would have been no difficulty. Half a year ago, the Flights had seemed to the young Whites angelic and infallible, and perhaps expectations had been founded on their patronage; but there had since been a shadow of disappointment, and altogether Kalliope was less disposed to believe that my Lady was correct in pronouncing Miss Mohun's cherished society as 'dissentish,'

and only calculated for low servant girls, and ladies who wished to meddle in families.

Clanship made Gillian's indignation almost bring down the office, and her eloquence was scarcely needed, since Kalliope had seen the value to some of her 'hands,' from the class, the library, the recreation-room, and the influence of the ladies; above all, the showing them that it was possible to have variety and amusement free from vulgar and perilous dissipation; but still she hesitated. She had no time, she said, she could not attend classes, and she was absolutely necessary at home in the evenings; but Gillian assured her that nothing was expected from her but a certain influence in the right direction, and the showing the younger and giddier that she did not think the Society beneath her.

'I see all that,' said Kalliope; 'I wish I had not been mistaken at first; but, Miss Mer—Gillian, I do not see how I can join it now.'

'Why not? What do you mean?'

Kalliope was very unwilling to speak, but at last it came.

'How can I do this to please your aunt, who thinks better of me than I deserve, when—— Oh! excuse me—I know it is all your kindness—but when I am allowing you to deceive her—almost, I mean——'

'Deceive! I never spoke an untrue word to my aunt in my life,' said Gillian, in proud anger; 'but if you think so, Miss White, I had better have no more to do with it.'

'I feel,' said Kalliope, with tears in her eyes, 'as if it might be better so, unless Miss Mohun knew all about it.'

'Well, if you think so, and like to upset all your brother's hopes.'

'It would be a terrible grief to him, I know, and I don't undervalue your kindness, indeed I don't; but I cannot be happy about it while Miss Mohun does not know. I don't understand why you do not tell her.'

'Because I know there would be a worry and a fuss. Either she would say we must wait for letters from mamma, or else that Alexis must come to Beechcroft, and all the comfort would be over, and it would be gossiped about all over the place. Can't you trust me, when I tell you I have written it all to my own father and mother, and surely I know my own family best?'

Kalliope looked half convinced, but she persisted—

'I suppose you do; only please, till there is a letter from Lady Merrifield, I had rather not go into this Society.'

'But, Kally, you don't consider. What am I to say to my aunt? What will she think of you?

'I can't help that! I cannot do this while she could feel I was conniving at what she might not like. Indeed, I cannot. I beg your pardon, but it goes against me. When shall you be able to hear from Lady Merrifield?'

'I wrote three weeks ago. I suppose I shall hear about half-way through December, and you know they could telegraph if they wanted to stop it, so I think you might be satisfied.'

Still Kalliope could not be persuaded, and finally, as a sort of compromise, Gillian decided on saying that she would think about it, and give her answer at Christmas; to which she gave a reluctant assent, with one more protest that if there were no objection to the lessons, she could not see why Miss Mohun should not know of them.

Peace was barely restored before voices were heard, and in came Fergus, bringing Alexis with him. They had met on the beach road in front of the works, and Fergus, being as usual full of questions about a crane that was swinging blocks of stone into a vessel close to the little pier, his aunt had allowed him to stay to see the work finished, after which Alexis would take him to join his sister.

So it came about that they all walked home together very cheerfully, though Gillian was still much vexed under the surface at Kalliope's old-maidish particularity.

However, the aunts were not as annoyed at the delay as she expected. Miss Mohun said she would look out some papers that would be convincing and persuasive, and that it might be as well not to enrol Miss White too immediately before the Christmas festivities, but to wait till the books were begun next year. Plans began to prevail for the Christmas diversions and entertainments; but the young Merrifields expected to have nothing to do with these, as they were to meet the rest of the family at their eldest uncle's house at Beechcroft; all except Harry, who was to be ordained in the Advent Ember week, and at once begin work with his cousin David Merrifield in the Black country. Their aunts would not go with them, as Beechcroft, though her native air, was too cold for Adeline in the winter, and Jane could leave neither her, nor her various occupations, and the festivities of all Rockstone.

It is not easy to say which Gillian most looked forward to: Mysie's presence, or the absence of the supervision which she imagined herself to suffer from, because she had set herself to shirk it. She knew she should feel more free. But behold! a sudden change, produced by one morning's letters.

'It is a beastly shame!'

'Oh, Fergus! That's not a thing to say,' cried Valetta.

'I don't care! It *is* a beastly shame not to go to Beechcroft, and be poked up here all the holidays.'

'But you can't when Primrose has got the whooping-cough.'

'Bother the whooping-cough.'

'And welcome; but you would find it bother you, I believe.'

'I shouldn't catch it. I want Wilfred, and to ride the pony, and see the sluice that Uncle Maurice made.'

'You couldn't if you had the cough.'

'Then I should stay there instead of coming back to school! I say it is horrid, and beastly, and abominable, and——'

'Come, come, Fergus,' here put in Gillian, 'that is very wrong.'

'You don't hear Gill and me fly out in that way,' added Valetta, 'though we are so sorry about Mysie and Fly.'

'Oh! you are girls, and don't know what is worth doing. I *will* say it is beast——'

'Now don't, Fergus; it is very rude and ungrateful to the aunts. None of us like having to stay here and lose our holiday; but it is very improper to say so in their own house, and I thought you were so fond of Aunt Jane.'

'Aunt Jane knows a thing or two, but she isn't Wilfred.'

'And Wilfred is always teasing you.'

'Fergus is quite right,' said Miss Mohun, who had been taking off her galoches in the vestibule while this colloquy was ending in the dining-room; 'it is much better to be bullied by a brother than made much of by an aunt, and you know I am very sorry for you all under the infliction.'

'Oh, Aunt Jane, we know you are very kind, and——' began Gillian.

'Never mind, my dear, I know you are making the best of us, and I am very much obliged to you for standing up for us. It *is* a great disappointment, but I was going to give Fergus a note that I think will console him.'

And out of an envelope which she had just taken from the letter-box, she handed him a note, which he pulled open and then burst out, 'Cousin David! Hurrah! Scrumptious!' commencing a war-dance at the same moment.

'What is it? Has David asked you?' demanded both his sisters at the same moment.

'Hurrah! Yes, it is from him. "My dear Fergus, I hope"—hurrah—"Harry, mm—mm—mm—brothers, 20th mm—mm. Your affectionate cousin, David Merrifield."'

'Let me read it to you,' volunteered Gillian.

'Wouldn't you like it?'

'How can you be so silly, Ferg? You can't read it yourself. You don't know whether he really asks you.'

Fergus made a face, and bolted upstairs to gloat, and perhaps peruse the letter, while Valetta rushed after him, whether to be teased or permitted to assist might be doubtful.

'He really does ask him,' said Aunt Jane. 'Your cousin David, I mean. He says that he and Harry can put up all the three boys between them, and that they will be very useful in the Christmas festivities of Coalham.'

'It is very kind of him,' said Gillian in a depressed tone. 'Fergus will be very happy.'

'I only hope he will not be bent on finding a coal mine in the garden when he comes back,' said Aunt Jane, smiling; 'but it is

rather dreary for you, my dear. I had been hoping to have Jasper here for, at least, a few days. Could he not come and fetch Fergus?'

Gillian's eyes sparkled at the notion; but they fell at once, for Jasper would be detained by examinations until so late that he would only just be able to reach Coalham before Christmas-day. Harry was to be ordained in a fortnight's time to work under his cousin, Mr. David Merrifield, and his young brothers were to meet him immediately after.

'I wish I could go too,' sighed Gillian, as a hungry yearning for Jasper or for Mysie took possession of her.

'I wish you could,' said Miss Mohun sympathetically; 'but I am afraid you must resign yourself to helping us instead.'

'Oh, Aunt Jane, I did not mean to grumble. It can't be helped, and you are very kind.'

'Oh, dear!' said poor Miss Jane afterwards in private to her sister, 'how I hate being told I am very kind! It just means, "You are a not quite intolerable jailor and despot," with fairly good intentions.'

'I am sure you are kindness itself, dear Jenny,' responded Miss Adeline. 'I am glad they own it! But it is very inconvenient and unlucky that that unjustifiable mother should have sent her child to the party to carry the whooping-cough to poor little Primrose, and Mysie, and Phyllis.'

'All at one fell swoop! As for Primrose, the worthy Halfpenny is quite enough for her, and Lily is well out of it; but Fly is a little shrimp, overdone all round, and I don't like the notion of it for her.'

'And Rotherwood is so wrappped up in her. Poor dear fellow, I hope all will go well with her.'

'There is no reason it should not. Delicate children often have it the most lightly. But I am sorry for Gillian, though if she would let us, I think we could make her happy.'

Gillian meantime, after her first fit of sick longing for her brother and sister and sense of disappointment, was finding some consolation in the reflection that had Jasper discovered her instructions to Alexis White, he would certainly have 'made no end of a row about it,' and have laughed to scorn the bare notion of her teaching Greek to a counting-house clerk! But then Jasper was wont to grumble and chafe at all employments—especially beneficent ones—that interfered with devotion to his lordly self, and, on the whole, perhaps he was safer out of the way, as he might have set on the aunts to put a stop to her proceedings. Of Mysie's sympathy she was sure, yet she would have her scruples about the aunts, and she was a sturdy person, hard to answer—poor Mysie, whooping away helplessly in the school-room at Rotherwood! Gillian felt herself heroically good-humoured and resigned. Moreover, here was the Indian letter so long looked for, likely by its date to be an answer to the information as to Alexis White's studies. Behold, it did not appear to touch on the subject at all! It was all about preparations for the double

wedding, written in scraps by different hands, at different times, evidently snatched from many avocations and much interruption. Of mamma there was really least of all; but squeezed into a corner, scarcely legible, Gillian read, 'As to lessons, if At. J. approves.' It was evidently an after-thought; and Gillian *could*, and chose to, refer it to a certain inquiry about learning the violin, which had never been answered—for the confusion that reigned at Columbo was plainly unfavourable to attending to minute details in home letters.

The longest portions of the despatch were papa's; since he was still unable to move about much. He wrote:—'Our two "young men" think it probable you will have invitations from their kith and kin. If this comes to pass, you had better accept them, though you will not like to break up the Christmas party at Beechcroft Court.'

There being no Christmas party at Beechcroft Court, Gillian, in spite of her distaste to new people, was not altogether sorry to receive a couple of notes by the same post, the first enclosed in the second, both forwarded from thence.

'Vale Leston Priory,
'*Dec.* 9*th.*

'My dear Miss Merrifield,—

'We are very anxious to make acquaintance with my brother Bernard's new belongings, since we cannot greet our new sister Phyllis ourselves. We always have a family gathering at Christmas between this house and the Vicarage, and we much hope that you and your brother will join it. Could you not meet my sister Mrs. Grinstead in London, and travel down with her on the 23rd? I am sending this note to her, as I think she has some such proposal to make.

'Yours very sincerely,
'Wilmet U. Harewood.'

The other letter was thus—

'Brompton,
'*Dec.* 10*th.*

'My dear Gillian,—

'It is more natural to call you thus, as you are becoming a sort of relation—very unwillingly, I dare say—for in this storm I too have lost "a sister." However, we will make the best of it, and please don't hate us more than you can help. Since your own home is dispersed for the present, it seems less outrageous to ask you to spend a Christmas-day among new people, and I hope we may make you feel at home with us, and that you will enjoy our beautiful Church at Vale Leston. We are so many that we may be less alarming if you take us by driblets, so perhaps it will be the best way if you will come up to us on the 18th or 19th, and go down with us on the 23rd. You will find no one with us but my nephew—

almost son—Gerald Underwood, and my niece, Anna Vanderkist, who will be delighted to make friends with your brother Jasper, who might perhaps meet you here. You must tell me all about Phyllis, and what she would like best for her Cingalese home.

'Yours affectionately,

'GERALDINE GRINSTEAD.'

Thus then affairs shaped themselves. Gillian was to take Fergus to London, where Jasper would meet them at the station, and put the little boy into the train for Coalham, whither his brother Wilfred had preceded him by a day or two.

Jasper and Gillian would then repair to Brompton for two or three days before going down with Mr. and Mrs. Grinstead to Vale Leston; and they were to take care to pay their respects to old Mrs. Merrifield, who had become too infirm to spend Christmas at Stokesley.

What was to happen later was uncertain, whether they were to go to Stokesley, or if Jasper would join his brothers at Coalham, or come down to Rockstone with his sister for the rest of the holidays. Valetta must remain there, and it did not seem greatly to distress her; and whereas nothing had been said about children, she was better satisfied to stay within reach of Kitty and mamma, and the Christmas-trees that began to dawn on the horizon, than to be carried into an unknown region of 'grown ups.'

While Gillian was not only delighted at the prospect of meeting Jasper, her own especial brother, but was heartily glad to make a change, and defer the entire question of lessons, confessions, and G. F. S. for six whole weeks. She might get a more definite answer from her parents, or something might happen to make explanation to her aunt either unnecessary or much more easy—and she was safe from discovery. But examinations had yet to be passed.

(To be continued.)

DAGMAR.

BY HELEN SHIPTON, AUTHOR OF 'CAIRNFORTH,' ETC.

CHAPTER III.

MAURICE.

'And Baron Castine of St. Castine
Hath come at last to his own again.'—LONGFELLOW.

'IT is not given to every one to know the future.'

It was Dagmar who uttered that by no means novel remark, at luncheon on the day following that on which they had paid their visit of inspection to the Court.

The rest of the party took no notice, but Mr. Layton, who was at luncheon with them, looked up and met her eyes with an amused and inquiring look. He was a tall, spare man, not handsome, but with a keen refined face, thin but healthy-looking, with firm compressed lips and deep set eyes, that often smiled while the rest of his face was grave.

He was beginning to understand this strange girl very well, by dint of his own observations and the revelations which Dick occasionally made concerning his most cherished companion, Day! And Dagmar knew that she was understood, and felt even more at ease and happy than usual in Mr. Layton's presence.

Just now she was looking rather comically grave.

'That remark,' she said, 'is intended to call attention to my own superior gifts. For I do know the future, at least I think I do.'

'So do we all, to a limited extent, or at least we think we do,' answered Mr. Layton, smiling.

'Ah! but I have got a presentiment. I never had one before, and do you know, it is very funny! I don't know that I altogether like it. It makes one feel that one ought to do something,—and how is one to tell *what* to do?'

'That might depend on what kind of presentiment it was.'

'Tell us what the presentiment feels like, and we may be in a position to advise,' put in Raymond from the other side of the table.

Dagmar did not look up at him, but kept her face turned towards Mr. Layton, and lowered her voice a little.

'Something is going to happen,' she said. 'Very soon, this afternoon perhaps,—something that will make a great difference to us all. I don't know what it is, but it is in the air; I feel it coming.'

'Pleasant or otherwise?' asked Mr. Layton, with his wise kindly smile.

'I don't know! But I think I should like to run away from it; or go back to this time last year, so that it should not be quite so near.'

'And yet you will be rather disappointed if it should turn out to be a false alarm, and to-morrow proves to be only as to-day.'

'Mr. Layton!' she said, with a quick turn of the head, 'you are too wise to be quite canny.'

'Need one be so very wise to remember the little follies of one's own youth? But be content—you would not draw back from the coming future, whatever it is, even if you could, and fortunately for you it will come at its own time and not at yours.'

She gave him a smiling eloquent glance for answer as he turned to give his attention to the Squire, who was saying from the head of the table—

'Mr. Layton, they tell me that your reverend brother, Pymont, at Lynthorpe, has set up the confessional in his parish. What is your opinion of that?'

Mr. Layton put on an air of extreme interest.

'Do you mean that he has *built* a confessional, inside or outside his church?'

'No,' said Mr. Tyndal, breaking into a laugh. 'How you can trip a fellow up! I mean that he receives confessions—hears them—in his vestry, or his study, or his dressing-room, for anything I know to the contrary!'

'Well!' said Mr. Layton reflectively, 'we have no vestry here at Winstead, you know. And my dressing-room is not precisely fitted up for the receiving of company. So I, if any confessions are offered me, being bound by my office to receive them,—must do so in my study. Will that answer to your ideas of what a confessional is or ought to be?'

'I don't know,' said the Squire, with another laugh. 'I only know that you are a great deal too sharp for me, and not altogether fair either. I don't believe you would stand up in the pulpit and order the people to come and confess to you; and nothing but *esprit de corps* makes you defend our friend Pymont when he does so.'

'I will not deny that *esprit de corps* goes for something in our army as well as in the other,' said Mr. Layton, with a whimsical smile, that seemed to defy the Squire's efforts to get at his real opinion. 'How are your hothouses looking this year?'

'Better than those at the Court, I should hope. If Maurice Claughton is of my opinion he will give that gardener, Simpson, his dismissal before he has been home a week. All the glass up there

is in a perfectly disgraceful condition. By-the-way, Layton, you'd better look about you, you know. No doubt Claughton is a Papist; but he may perhaps be brought over. And he will find Mr. Pymont's ways so congenial, that if you don't take care Pymont will have the glory of his conversion.'

Mrs. Tyndal looked reproachfully at her husband. But there was something so good-humoured and thoughtless about the Squire's attempts at raillery that a worse-tempered man than Mr. Layton might have taken them in good part. Mr. Layton only laughed.

'If Mr. Claughton is an Ultramontane of the new school he will probably regard Mr. Pymont's church views as more hopelessly wrong than those of the worshippers at the little Ebenezer in Netherton High Street. Let me see your garden, Squire, and we will discuss Mr. Claughton's conversion when we have ascertained his religious opinions.'

They were leaving the luncheon-table as he spoke, and Mr. Tyndal, who was both fond and proud of his garden, willingly led the way across the hall and out at the ever-open front door. Dagmar followed, slipping a hand under her father's arm, prepared to follow the two elders with great pleasure through a political or botanical discussion, during which neither of them would take more notice of her than if she were not there.

They lingered for a moment on the steps of the porch, the Squire lighting his afternoon cigar. Dagmar's quick ears caught the click of the drive gate, which was out of sight behind the evergreens.

'*Some one is coming*,' she said to herself, and stood still with eyes fixed upon the bend of the path, while her father and Mr. Layton talked on unheeded.

A tall young man in a light grey summer suit came round the corner of the shrubbery, walking somewhat slowly, with head thrown back, and questioning glances directed here and there. At the sight of the party on the steps he neither hastened nor slackened his light even step, but came quietly up to them in the most matter-of-course manner. Glancing towards Dagmar for an instant he removed his hat altogether, and stood looking at the two gentlemen with it in his hand.

His rapid glance measured them both from head to foot, then turning to the Squire, he held out his hand with a smile.

'You are Mr. Tyndal, I think,' he said.

'To be sure I am. And—bless my soul!—why, of course—you are Maurice Claughton!'

'Yes!' said the young man, 'I am Maurice'—and he stopped short and looked at them with a sort of wistful dignity, as if he were anxious for a welcome, yet doubtful how far he had a right to claim it.

'Why! really—I am very glad to see you,' cried the Squire, still

amazed. 'But why did you not let us know you were coming to-day?'

'Did you not then expect me? I wrote—when I arrived in London—to the Court. But perhaps I did not write it properly—the name of the woman who takes care of the house—for I forget always what it is.'

'Oh! very likely. But never mind—only I am sorry that there was no one to meet you. Welcome home at last, my dear boy. For your father's sake, you know, I am almost as glad to see you as if you were a son of my own. And now come in and see my wife. But first of all, this is my daughter Day—my only child—and this is my very good friend Mr. Layton, the Rector of the parish and your nearest neighbour.'

Maurice Claughton took the hand which Dagmar held out to him, and just touched it with his fingers and bowed deeply over it in a way that reminded them all of his foreign bringing-up.

Then he bowed to Mr. Layton with a grave considering look, and they all went into the house together.

One of Mrs. Tyndal's peculiarities was that no one had ever yet seen her taken by surprise. She received the new-comer with a kind, almost motherly welcome, but with an air of having expected him a long time.

And as she inquired if he had had any luncheon—how long he had been travelling—what he had done with his luggage, and so forth—all the family were more or less openly studying his appearance, and gleaning first impressions.

His hair was dark brown, very short, but curling in a somewhat picturesque fashion, eyebrows strongly marked, nose very slightly aquiline, and chin square and rather prominent. Altogether a handsome face, with complexion of clear pale brown, and wonderful eyes of bright yellow hazel—eyes that had no one prevailing expression, as so many have, but were mere windows for many succeeding emotions to look out of, and occasionally were absolutely blank.

He was tall and largely made, but thin, perhaps from restless activity of mind or body; and had somehow missed the prosperous well-fed look of most young and healthy Englishmen, though he looked perfectly well and strong.

There was a certain dignity about him—especially when his eyes looked blank—that made him seem older than they knew him to be, and a slight formality of speech added to the impression.

The Squire began to reconsider certain letters of fatherly reproof and advice which he had addressed to this stately young man, and to wonder how he had had the courage to do so; and Dagmar wondered whether it would ever come to his ears that she had caused him to be known as *the Myth!*

Mr. Tyndal ordered a dogcart to be sent to Netherton station for the luggage which Mr. Claughton had left there, and set himself

to prove to the young man that he must for the present look upon the Hall as his home, while the Court was being turned out of windows.

Maurice Claughton thanked him, and explained that he had been on his way to the Court when some one in the village had misdirected him, and sent him instead to the Hall. He spoke in somewhat set phrases, but his eloquent eyes were questioning the Squire's face all the while as if to see whether his courtesy were merely formal or genuine and spontaneous. Perhaps what he saw there satisfied him, for the slight stiffness of manner suddenly dropped like a mask, and a smile showed a gleam of white teeth beneath the short dark moustache that lay like a shadow upon his upper lip.

'You are very good,' he said; 'I have been told that people in England do not understand hospitality, but my first day's experience has taught me differently. Shall I really not be in your way if I remain here until my own house has again a shelter to offer me?'

He glanced towards Mrs. Tyndal as he spoke.

'We shall be most pleased to have you,' she said in her gentle cordial fashion. 'And you must stay till the Court is a good deal more than simply watertight. You will find much to be done there.'

'Ah! yes. I suppose it looks very neglected now, and very dreary. I was sure, directly I had passed through your gate here, that I had failed to make my inquiries understood, and that it was not the house of the absentee landlord that I was approaching. I have seen many things, but it seemed to me that I had never seen anything more beautiful, in its way, than this house and the grounds around it.'

'Ay?' said the Squire, beaming with conscious pride, 'now you're flattering us. But we have some fine trees about, and the hill behind the house stands out well.'

Maurice smiled and shook his head.

'I did not see the hill,' he said. 'And the trees perhaps were not by the way that I came; I did not notice them. It was the smooth gravel, and the grass, cut so short and fine and smooth, like moss. It all looks so neat and well cared for, as if it were the home of people who loved it.'

'Come out and take a look round, if you are not tired,' said Mr. Tyndal. 'Mr. Layton was just asking to see the garden when you came.'

'No, I am not tired,' he answered, rising, with a little look of surprise. 'I have done nothing to day but sit in a railway carriage and walk a mile or two. That is not a hard day's work.'

The three gentlemen went out together, and Dick, who had hardly taken his eyes off the new-comer since his arrival, went meekly after them in company with Laddie, the colley dog, who also evidently wished to form an unprejudiced opinion of the stranger from every point of view. And the three ladies, left behind, turned upon

Raymond and demanded *his* opinion of Mr. Claughton. Raymond remarked that he had none to give, and that he had letters to write, and departed with something less than his usual urbanity; while his aunt and cousins, enlivened by an excitement just sufficient to be pleasurable, found plenty to say in the way of comment and conjecture.

The afternoon passed by, and Mrs. Tyndal had just completed her arrangements for the comfort of her new guest by calling to mind what she had heard of Continental customs, and ordering coffee to be brought in with the tea at five o'clock, when the Squire came in, bringing Mr. Claughton with him, and reporting that Mr. Layton was gone home.

Raymond emerged again from his room, having, as it seemed, written his letters and recovered his wonted serenity.

The Squire was a man never at a loss for words, and he had a great deal to say to Maurice on the subject of his estate. But he felt that it was hardly well to begin talking of business so immediately, and thus his conversation became a series of jerks rather than an even flow, since he was always beginning upon the forbidden subject, and, as it were, choking himself off it immediately.

Agnes came to the rescue, with her tact and power of making conversation; and though she did not succeed in inducing Mr. Claughton to talk very much, she contrived to keep up a very fair flow of conversation amongst the company generally until it was time to dress for dinner.

In his evening dress Maurice looked handsomer than ever; so handsome, that Mrs. Tyndal and Agnes afterwards agreed that it did not much matter whether he talked or not; he conferred a benefit on society merely by showing himself! But he also became more conversable after a little while, and Agnes, watching him, convinced herself that his 'grand air' was merely a delusion. He was only very shy, and when he felt more shy than usual his eyes became blank, his manners dignified and ceremonious. She set herself to make him talk and to make him feel at ease, and he responded much as an amiable and well-disposed schoolboy might respond to such efforts, only with this difference, that he really had something to talk about, and when once fairly launched could be both amusing and interesting.

Raymond did not join much in the talk, since he was sitting by Mrs. Tyndal, and she, with the best intentions, was rather persecuting him about his health, distressing herself because he neither ate nor slept as much as she thought he ought to do, and trying to persuade him to adopt some peculiar regimen which had been mentioned to her, and which she herself but half understood.

But without these two the talk began to wax quite lively at the other end of the table. Dick had got over the very moderate amount of shyness he had ever been troubled with, and was putting in very

serious but rather absurd questions at every pause in his elder's conversation—questions which betrayed a decided impression that 'foreign parts is all one.' And Day was quoting

'I see Jerusalem and Madagascar,
And North and South Amerikee,'

to his confusion, while Maurice looked so puzzled that Agnes made her tell him from whence the lines came, and the adventures of the three bold 'boys of Bristol City.' At which he laughed, for the first time, such a clear ringing boyish laugh, as made them all seem at home with him at once.

In the drawing-room after dinner the piano seemed to draw him with an irresistible fascination.

'No, I do nothing in that way myself,' he said, in answer to a question of Agnes. 'I can never attempt anything higher than a chorus of a student's song—what you would sing here at a wine party. But I love music, and I have heard much music all over the world. And I know that there is no music like an English lady's singing.'

'Now you have made us nervous,' said Agnes, smiling. 'Your standard is too high, I fear; we shall not come up to it. Day, you shall sing first; you have no nerves worth mentioning.'

'I don't see why any one should be nervous about singing,' answered Dagmar, slipping sideways on to the music-stool and turning it slowly round. 'One sings as one can, of course, and unless one is absolutely afraid of wrong notes——'

'Yes,' said Agnes, smiling. 'I said you were not nervous, didn't I? And no more are the robins that were singing just outside my window this morning. Sing us one of your queer old songs that are like no one else's, and leave nerves to those who understand such things.'

Dagmar laughed, and brought her hands down upon the keys with a crash. But perhaps she was shy, after all, for she gave them no tender sentimental heart-breaking ditty, only a half-rollicking, half-defiant sea-song, with a distinct flavour of salt-water and echo of shrill sea-breezes piping through the shrouds—

'Blow high, blow low, let tempests tear
The mainmast by the board.'

'Give us something gentler, Day,' said her cousin softly, as she ended; and the girl laughed again, and touched the notes as gently as possible while she sang, hardly above a whisper—

'In Scarlett town where I was born,
There was a fair maid dwellin'.'

Agnes turned away smiling; but Maurice lingered near the piano like one in a dream.

'You laugh, but it is all serious earnest to me,' he said, smiling as she ended. 'Remember, these are all the songs which I have heard of all my life, but never met with. Sing something more, please.'

'It is Agnes' turn now,' said Dagmar, turning upon the stool and beckoning to her cousin. 'She shall sing you all those quaint old-fashioned ditties which she was trying over on your piano the other day.'

'My piano?' said the young man, bending his dark flexible brows with a slightly puzzled look.

'Yes. I forgot—of course you don't know. How funny to have a whole houseful of things and not to know any of them. There is a quaint old piano, I should be afraid to say how old, in one of the rooms at the Court, and when we were up there the other day Agnes was playing on it some airs as old as itself. We took liberties, you see, in the master's absence.'

'You had my free permission. But I wish you would promise me one thing,' he said, lowering his voice, and speaking in an impulsive boyish way.

'What is it?'

'You say that you all went up there—to the Court—when I was not there. I wish you would all come up with me when I go for the first time—to-morrow, or whenever it is.'

'Of course we will, if you wish it,' said Dagmar frankly; but her eyes asked, 'Why?'

'It is very foolish, I confess,' he went on, his brows drawn down till his eyes looked almost black. 'But I can't help disliking the idea of the first sight of the place. I shall get used to them after a time, no doubt; but I am sure there will be many ghosts there!'

'I am glad that you believe in ghosts,' said Day eagerly. 'So few people believe in them now-a-days.'

'That,' said Maurice sententiously, 'is because material-minded people have made them vulgar by pretending that they could be seen. And then they have pretended also to be afraid of them. Now, I think, I should not fear a ghost that I could *see*.'

'I don't know,' said Dagmar, her eyes as grave as if she were very serious indeed. 'I should be very sorry not to believe in ghosts; and I have often thought I should like to see one. But people always assure you that it is an alarming experience.'

'It need not be,' said the young man, almost as gravely, 'for a visible ghost would have something rather human about it, after all. And you could speak to it, and ask it why it came, and so forth. But these invisible ghosts may be there or not, and you cannot tell what they are doing, and somehow that makes them rather awful. So,' he said, throwing back his head and smiling in mockery of himself, 'you can understand now that I shall be glad of society when I go to-morrow to dispossess the ghosts of this house which has been left to them so long.'

'Then you are going to turn out the spirits of your ancestors. That shows a lamentable want of family feeling.'

'What can I do?' he said, the lightness of his tone just touched with a certain gloom. 'There will not be room for the ghosts and for me.'

'At least give them legal warning before you turn the paperers and painters in upon them,' cried Dagmar, with a little ripple of laughter in her voice. 'Agnes, if you are not busy, just come and sing to us.'

Agnes smiled and came. The singing was very different to her young cousin's, and much more like other people's. She was not fond of strange words or striking sentiments; but she sang very sweetly and prettily all the songs that young ladies sing now, or used to sing some years ago.

And Maurice leaned upon the piano or hovered near, and was so evidently pleased with the singing, and grateful for being talked to, that Agnes unbent towards him, and treated him in her most sweet and gracious fashion.

Raymond looked on from a little distance with grave dreamy eyes. It was long since he had thus seen another man doing what he himself had done so often, and the sight mocked him with the remembrance of his lost youth. Last time he had seen anything like it, he had felt the sharp sting of jealousy; but he was not jealous now.

'He is nothing but a handsome boy, for all his stately looks,' he said to himself. 'I might be jealous perhaps—of his youth—but after all we are no older than we make ourselves. And I intend to grow young again, and to fall in love with my beautiful Day.'

Very soon Dagmar left the neighbourhood of the piano, and took up some knitting of her mother's, and did some most remarkable stitches in it, while Raymond came and talked to her. Talking to Dagmar was an enlivening kind of mental exercise; but there was not much repose about it. At this stage of her development, she was not at all what gentle, middle-aged women call 'such a sweet girl.' Privately she was not a little sentimental, but publicly she had a horror of it, and she had strange freaks and turns of fancy which often made her feel inclined to laugh when she might have been expected to cry. No one knew—herself least of all—whether she was deep-thinking or childishly simple; and her sympathies, though deep and keen, were sometimes hard to find.

When she talked in her usual random fashion, Raymond was merely puzzled by her; but sometimes she seemed to be studying him with pitying interest, and then he almost loved her—and sometimes he could fancy that she saw him through, and was mocking him—and then he almost hated her.

The evening was passing over so quietly, that it was hardly possible to believe that the young master of the Court, so often

talked of, so long expected, was actually here at last. There he sat by the piano, talking to Agnes Morrison, handsome and quiet, with even less vivacity of gesture than is affected by most Englishmen, with no foreign accent, though it was very often evident, from the form of his sentences, that he did not think in English. Mr. Tyndal, looking across at him, could not but confess that poor Mrs. Claughton's scheme of foreign education and travel for her son had not apparently turned out so ill as he had feared.

Towards ten o'clock the Squire went out to take his nightly stroll round the premises, and came back from the door in a little excitement.

'Come, this is as it should be,' he said. 'They've got the bells ringing. That's for you, Maurice. Some one has let the ringers know that you have come back.'

'The bells?' repeated Maurice inquiringly.

'Yes. Listen!'—and Mr. Tyndal threw open the drawing-room window.

Wafted down on the soft cool air of the September night, came the sweet chime of the four old bells, now louder, now fainter, as the light wind rose and fell.

Maurice sprang to his feet, looking startled, perplexed, almost angry.

'For me?' he said. 'But I don't like it! It is unnecessary—absurd! Cannot they be stopped?'

'No, no!' said the Squire. 'It is all very right and proper, and they enjoy doing it. They'll expect a trifle to drink your health, I dare say.'

'Can some one not take them a sovereign—two sovereigns—and tell them to stop them at once? I—I don't want them to ring! It is an absurdity that the people of the village should be kept awake in their beds because *I* have come home.'

He tried to laugh as he said the last words; but he was plainly in earnest, and not a little annoyed likewise.

Rather unwillingly, Mr. Tyndal summoned a footman, to whom Maurice gave a couple of sovereigns, and a very peremptory message to the ringers to cease ringing at once.

'They won't understand you,' said the Squire, rather maliciously, after the servant had gone. 'They will be overjoyed at your munificence, and they will not conceive it possible that you don't like their ringing. So they will go on twice as long as they originally intended, out of sheer gratitude.'

And sure enough, after the party at the Hall were all in bed, the bells of the little Church up by the Court were still sending down triumphant peal after peal, telling to all the village that the young master was come at last to his own again.

(To be continued.)

A PLUNGE IN TROUBLED WATERS.

BY MISS C. E. COLERIDGE.

Matter of course, matter of choice.

CHAPTER V.

CHRISTMAS ENTERTAINMENTS.

ALL these contending influences made Mrs. Woodford more than ever determined that her children's regular Sunday-school training should be kept up. If they were properly taught on the Sunday, they would be likely to keep in the right way; and Alice was quite right when she said to herself that mother hadn't the least idea of what Sunday-school was like in Dulworth. There was a great deal of irreverence, and more ill-manners, and Miss Walters was not strong enough to deal with it; but she was worried by it, the attendance at the little school was thin, and the teachers few and irregular. Even Esther Woodford was not proof against the infection of taking liberties, and answered all the questions in a sharp, saucy voice, which, in her secret soul, she knew would never have been tolerated in Roseberry; while Alice grew depressed and indifferent, and did not answer at all.

With the boys matters were much worse, and tales of their misconduct amused the girls as they whispered them to each other. Robert had been provided with a small class, which he did keep in order, and he patronised Mr. Anson, and frequently explained to him points of school management; while Alfred had become one of the wildest and most daring of the set. A good deal had been said during the year of the prizes which were to be the reward of good conduct, and in especial of a Christmas treat, which both Mr. Anson and Miss Waters had publicly declared would be the portion only of the well-behaved. Alice Woodford privately thought that the numbers present would be very small if this condition was to be carried out, and Robert remarked that Alfred had better mind his manners, or he'd find himself at home on the night of the Christmas-tree.

'Oh,' said Alfred, 'Frank Nutt, he says 'twon't make no manner of difference; most likely they won't get the money to pay for our prizes till near Easter, and then they'll have forgotten who's to have 'em. And we're all safe enough to go to the treat, however much old Anson may jaw about it first.'

'I know one boy as won't go to the treat, if he can't speak as he

ought in my hearing,' said Woodford, who was just going off on his day's work.

Alfred subsided. Etty giggled and said, 'Father *was* particular;' while Alice said, addressing no one in particular, 'Father and Mother 'll know some day that the schools here only spoil us.'

On the Sunday before Christmas matters were worse than usual. The first-class girls had an extra fit of inattention, and Esther Woodford was as bad as any. Miss Walters for once sharply reproved her, and took away her marks. As she did so, she met Alice's eyes looking at her with that unfriendly, unsubmissive look which all teachers know, and which at the moment annoyed her exceedingly.

'You encourage your sister in disobedience, Alice Woodford,' she said. 'Your influence in the class is not good. I should be sorry to be obliged to punish you too.'

Alice had never been publicly reproved since she was a tiny child in the third standard. She coloured scarlet, and, though too well trained to speak her vexation, sat in angry silence, refusing to answer the questions directly asked of her, and showing so much temper, that Miss Walters carried out her threat, and left a blank in her conduct marks, saying—

'I am disappointed in you, Alice. I thought when first you came that you would have been more helpful.'

It was quite true. Alice might have loyally helped her teacher, and influenced her sister, at least, in the right direction. But she did not like being taught by Miss Walters, and, in spite of her quietness and regular attendance, she showed it, thinking that it was all loyalty to her dear Roseberry, and no good understanding had ever sprung up. Now she was very angry; so angry that she was ready to go straight home, instead of walking with the school to church. But she did not quite dare to do this, so she cried ostentatiously half through the service; while Esther only laughed at her bad marks, and was far more in the prevailing fashion when she declared that they didn't matter to her one bit.

In the meanwhile Alfred's class had brought matters to a climax that morning. They pretended, all of them, to be unable to find their places in their Bibles, they had fits of unnatural forgetfulness and stupidity, and burst with laughing at each other's mistakes. They peeped over their teacher's Bible, and hustled her, under pretence of seeing where she was reading. They ran out of their places, they blew their noses, and they shuffled their feet, till at last Miss Brown shut her book, rose and walked up to Mr. Anson, and said that she could teach them no more unless they behaved better.

Mr. Anson came up to the class, and poked them back into their places, making much too kind an excuse for them by saying that he supposed that their spirits got the better of them at Christmas-time, and then, finding Miss Brown determined, sent them out to play till church-time—an arrangement very agreeable to the little reprobates,

who proceeded to rush about the yard and yell at the top of their voices, chasing each other up and down the girls' staircase, to the great annoyance of the upstairs party.

When the Woodford children came home to dinner, Robert declared that there would be no treat for Alfred, or for any of his class, after such disgraceful behaviour; and Alice, with red eyes and choked voice, said that she did not wish to go to the treat—even if mother made her go to school—after being used in this way.

'Nonsense, Ally,' said Esther, 'what do the marks matter? Nobody cares about them here. Last year they gave every one a prize, all alike for encouragement, whether they were good or naughty.'

'I did nothing,' said Alice.

'Well, girls,' said Mrs. Woodford, ''tis all very well, but there may be mistakes everywhere. I got a bad mark once myself when I was at school, that I don't think I deserved. But dear, dear! what I should have lost if I'd left school in a huff on account of it.'

'Oh,' said Esther, 'Miss Walters ain't a very clever teacher, but she's kind enough, and we do lead her a life sometimes. But Polly Mason says she gets ever so much more good at the Congregational.'

All parties were astonished when, at school that afternoon, a Christmas-tree in the National School—for all the Sunday schools of the parish together—was announced for the 29th of December. Nothing was said of past misconduct, Mr. Anson only expressing a hope that the St. Michael's children would do themselves credit among the others.

In truth, Mr. Anson and all his teachers would much have preferred to have their own treat to themselves. Their school was watched with critical eyes by the older authorities of the parish; it was regarded as an experiment by the Rector, who would be very likely to break it up, if he considered that it was a failure, either in numbers or management. Mr. Randall was a great organiser, and a powerful person in every way; he had an immense parish, rapidly increasing, under his charge, and the old schools and charities of the place were effectively administered mostly by old inhabitants. But new-comers of all ranks sometimes found themselves a little neglected, and preferred to attach themselves to the daughter churches, which had gradually become independent of the great gloomy old building on the top of the hill, which still frowned down on the new districts below it. St. Michael's was altogether young and experimental, and not let out of rectorial control; and though it was Mr. Randall's way to leave much freedom to his subordinates, he always knew what they were about.

St. Michael's might easily have been far worse off, for Mr. Anson was hard-working and most anxious to do his duty, there was no wilful neglect; but there was a great deal of imperfect management, very little money, and workers few in number, and mostly with little experience. It required sounder Church principles than the majority

of the St. Michael's people possessed to know always how to act under these not uncommon circumstances. Life would be much simplified if authorities always appeared in an imposing and satisfactory light, never made mistakes, and neither supported their authority hastily nor let it drop weakly out of their hands. Perhaps the very high demands of wisdom and self-devotion which are made on the clergy and their helpers, really spring from a kind of loyalty to the Church; but it is well to remember that people are not absolved from their own duties even when they may rightly find fault with the way in which clergy, Sunday-school teachers, and district visitors perform theirs. Alice Woodford was paying her own dear Miss Alice a very bad compliment, when she gave trouble to Miss Walters; and her mother was really carrying out the principles she had learned at Roseberry when she tried to make the best of things at Dulworth.

They had a fairly cheerful Christmas, for were they not all in good health, and together, with regular work and regular wages, and good prospects for the children. The father and mother had seen enough of life to know that with all these blessings they could not have much to complain of. Still, when Mrs. Woodford sent off her flock to meet at St. Michael's School for the Christmas-tree, it was with some anxiety as to how the affair would go off. And Esther felt that if her present was not as handsome as the box of scent which Polly Mason had received from the Congregational treat, she should feel quite ashamed of herself and her school, and would feel as if Church principles did not pay.

The children assembled at dusk on a damp foggy afternoon, and were to be marched up 'in order' to the National School. In order! No one was quite certain whether the boys or the girls were to go first—whether the first class or the infants were to lead the way. Mr. Anson rushed up and down the stairs in frantic haste, while Robert at the bottom, shouted, 'Silence, boys,' in tones as like Dr. Goodall's as he could make them. Miss Walters and her second in command got the girls into procession, and off they set, both schools at once, and tumbling over each other, with St. Michael's banner waving about in a most unsteady fashion at their head. How it happened no one knew, but as they approached the National School, the boys set off full tilt, with Mr. Anson and the banner-bearer scrambling after them, till at the school gate they fell into the clutches of the day-school master, who stopped their career and brought them in at the rear of the other boys in a decent manner. The girls meanwhile scuffled and hurried and broke their ranks, pouring anyhow into the girls' school door, and, rushing at the first table they saw empty, in spite of Miss Walters' 'Wait, girls, wait, till I know where you are to sit,' were proceeding to storm it, till a voice well known to some of them fell on their ears, clear and strong:

The St. Michael's girls will please to go in an orderly manner to the tables nearest the fireplace, the first class to the top.'

All the girls who had been under Miss Lydiard, the dignified elderly lady who superintended the National Sunday-school, jumped up, and did as they were told at once, and the others followed in surprise. Miss Walters found her place, reflecting perhaps on former strictures on Miss Lydiard's system, and on her intentions of gaining *her* children's affections first, and then of finding it so easy to keep them in order afterwards. The boys were in their own school, but a movable partition had been pushed back, between the two rooms, so that the whole party were at tea together. Order was fairly maintained, and Mr. Anson waited on his own party, Miss Lydiard was safely away at the top of the room, and Miss Walters was too thankful not to be the object of public attention, to notice the little roughness and vulgarities in which some of her charge were indulging, or to hear their remarks.

'I paid and went to the Congregational,' said one; '*their* cake was better than this.'

'Yes; and St. Augustine's had cups and saucers. We're too big for *mugs*.'

'But there *is* table-cloths. Kate Spratt, who goes to the Wesleyans, said we shouldn't have none.'

'Did you have cups and saucers at Roseberry,' asked a little Mason of Alice.

'No; we had a summer treat, and sat on the grass.'

'Like a set of babies! Tables is more genteel.'

The genteel and grown-up young ladies proceeded, as the attraction of cakes and buns diminished, to drink out of each other's mugs and try to spill each other's tea, making a great noise over the process; while the St. Michael's boys shouted out loudly for more cake.

At last grace was sung, and the Rector, Mr. Randall, stood up to make a speech.

He was a tall vigorous man, with a fine face and dark eyes, and though without the winning kindly smile, which had reflected itself on every face when Dr. Goodall stood up to speak on a festive occasion, he looked likely to command a hearing.

Finding that his first words were interrupted by a hum of voices, he paused, looked in a leisurely way round the room, and then said—

'I am waiting till the St. Michael's tables, both girls and boys, are ready to pay attention.'

There was instant silence; but Miss Walters felt as if she never could forgive the Rector for calling public attention to her difficulties.

The Rector's speech was short and to the point, with more about good behaviour and less about pleasure than is perhaps agreeable at a festive season, and by the time it was over, the tree was ready, and every one was to repair to the infant school to receive their presents.

Alas, on the way there, the St. Michael's girls and boys contrived to get themselves mixed up together, big and little, in an unruly mass. Alice, never good at fighting her way, and dragging little Sue by the

hand, found herself, with the two or three girls whom she most disliked, pushed up among some big rough boys. The crowd was very great, much too great for the size of the room, and only the strictest discipline could have maintained order among the number of excited children, all ready to snatch at the presents, and to grumble if they did not like their own share. Even the experienced teachers were sore put to it, and Miss Walters had given up in despair, and stood by the tree, letting matters take their chance.

The boy next Alice received, by mistake probably, for he was at least fourteen, a toy whip, and called out in a loud disgusted voice, 'Call this a present, 'taint worth carrying home.' While a loud noisy shout rose around him.

'Who are those children on the left?' asked the Rector.

'The St. Michael's first classes,' said Miss Lydiard.

Mr. Randall walked up to them.

'Where are their teachers? Mr. Anson, will you be kind enough to call your scholars to order? They must dispense with their presents till they can learn to receive them properly. And as for these girls, who have pushed themselves into this disorderly corner. Their names, if you please, Miss Walters?'

'Alice Woodford, Mary Jackson, Sylvia Gore,' said Miss Walters. 'Girls, I am ashamed of you, come out directly, and move over to the girls' side.'

'Humph! Confirmation candidates,' said the Rector. 'Their names had better be reconsidered. I have been observing them for some time.'

'Miss Walters never called us away,' said Sylvia Gore, a tall saucy-looking girl, with a thick red fringe over her eyes.

Miss Walters pushed Alice rather roughly towards the girls' side of the room.

'I didn't expect it of you, Alice,' she said, all her own hurt feeling showing in her voice.

The Rector was considered stern, the St. Michael's managers felt in disgrace.

'A nice mess they seem to have made of it,' Miss Walters heard one of the teachers of the old school saying, and she could have cried with vexation.

'I don't care,' said Sylvia, 'I only agreed to be confirmed because the district lady asked mother so often; she said it worrited her to say no.'

'I'll go and attend St. Mark's school for a bit, and Mr. Clinton, *he'll* prepare me and glad,' said Mary Jackson.

But Alice Woodford felt as if she could never lift up her head again, shame, anger, and miserable longing for the thorough comprehension of her old friends completely overpowered her, and she stood in the corner and cried through all the shouting and cheering till she was pushed out into the street among the crowd of children, and, unheeding brothers and sisters, made her way homewards.

CHAPTER VI.

PUZZLED AND PUT TO THE TEST.

On that same evening Lily Woodford was sitting in the parlour making up the blue bows which she was to wear as a soprano singer in the approaching concert. Young Mr. Bailey, who was to be a steward on the occasion, had brought in a bundle of tickets, and had persuaded Mrs. Woodford into the extravagance of a family ticket for 2*s.* 6*d.* to admit herself, Woodford, and two children.

'You wouldn't be able to see me, aunt, if you sat in the threepenny places; and no doubt the boys would be rough.'

'Bob can take his little brothers there if he likes,' said Mrs. Woodford. 'But dear me, the children go out oftener here than ever our young ladies did at Roseberry. There's the school-treat to-night, and Etty's Band of Hope tea on Wednesday, and Bob's next Monday. And this Concert, and a Penny Reading down at St. Michael's, and if I liked to let them go with other schools, and could pay the sixpences for them, they might be gadding every night.'

'Well, aunt, what harm would it do them?' said Lily. 'Pleasure's good for us all when it don't interfere with work. Oh, how I do like a bit of a dance; but there! there's always something against it.'

'Why, you girls had a dance at the last school-treat we ever went to at home,' said Woodford.

'Yes, us *girls*,' said Lily, with a slight emphasis.

'I don't think there'll be many dances come in your way here, Lily,' said her uncle. 'I don't hear of none that's fitting for *my* niece.'

'More's the pity,' said Lily, with a pout.

'More's the pity, indeed,' said Mr. Bailey. 'Why don't the clergy, and those who really wish to elevate and civilise, throw open their big schoolrooms and be real rivals to the public-houses?'

'Because schoolrooms weren't built to dance in,' said Woodford decidedly.

'But it's been done,' said Bailey—'done in London; and it isn't at all unusual at country harvest homes and the like.'

'No,' said Mrs. Woodford; 'but it's different when the gentry know who will be there. And I've heard say that it's made impossible for places near a railway by strangers coming and buying tickets.'

'Oh, they should have a committee,' said Bailey, 'and lady patronesses, such as yourself, Mrs. Woodford, to sell the tickets to proper persons only, and stewards that understood their business, and had some education; and then, if drink was excluded, and the refreshments conducted on temperance principles, and it didn't last too long, we'd soon accustom people to the idea. There's plenty of such entertainments very well managed and kept respectable, but

they're a bit too expensive for quiet working people. And besides, *we* should conduct it with a view to results and not to gain.'

'Oh, aunt,' said Lily, giggling, 'fancy *you* a "lady patroness."'

'I don't fancy it, my dear,' said Mrs. Woodford. 'I couldn't think of such a responsibility, leading girls to dress and gaiety, and amusements out of their station.'

'But why should anything that's cheap be out of anybody's station?' argued Mr. Bailey. 'We might hire a room, but it would be better if the clergyman would lend his school, for we should wish for the highest sanction. A volunteer band—music *no* one objects to—decorations executed by any one who could be found with artistic talent, the leading ladies to set an example of a simple style of dress, no alcoholic liquors, at any rate for the present; the question of tobacco to be decided by a majority of votes, tickets only sold by the stewards and patronesses—we might even let the parson have a veto if he made a great point of it—shut up at eleven-thirty—half an hour after the publics—and there you have fortnightly entertainments of the most innocent and elevating character, and no expense at all to speak of.'

'Oh!' cried Lily, clasping her hands, 'that would be downright delightful.'

'Where'll you catch your parson?' said Mr. Woodford.

'Well, I'm not at liberty to say much,' said Bailey; 'but I'm not one of those that despair of finding enlightenment in the Church. And a day may come!'

'When it *do*,' said Woodford, 'I'll open the ball with Lily.'

'That's a promise, Mr. Woodford. But here come the little ones. Amusements aren't considered out of their station; and depend upon it, they'll be all the better for their treat.'

The Woodford family, as they came into the parlour, did not at that moment present a convincing argument of the elevating and brightening influence of social amusements.

Esther's best frock bore traces down the front of streams of tea, Susan was crying with fatigue, and Alfred crept up to Lily and blew a loud and horrible tin trumpet into her ear. Alice fled into the kitchen at sight of Mr. Bailey, while Robert remarked sententiously, that he never wished to go to another treat in Dulworth.

'What's the matter? Haven't you enjoyed yourselves? Haven't you behaved well?' said his father.

'They don't know how to behave well enough to be fit for treats, and that's a fact,' said Robert.

'We lost Alice, and have only just caught up with her,' said Etty, 'and she's crying ever so.'

Here Mr. Bailey thought it best to take his departure, and as soon as the door closed behind him, Alice rushed in and poured out her troubles.

'Nobody spoke for me—nobody knew. I never spoke to those

horrid girls—and oh! to be evened to them, and thought not fit for Confirmation. Miss Walters spites me, I know she does.'

When the confused story was made plain, the parents were naturally very indignant, Woodford saying that he had never thought to see his girl treated so, and Mrs. Woodford more wisely insisting that there had been a mistake, and Mr. Anson would explain it.

'I want some supper,' said Sue, in a whining voice; 'the girl next me snatched away all my cake.'

'Well, I never knew you come back hungry before,' said Mrs. Woodford.

'Oh,' sobbed Alice, ''twas all different. They didn't give us *this* treat because they loved us, and liked us to be happy; but because they were obliged on account of the other schools, I heard Mr. Anson *say* so to Miss Walters. Nobody knew us one from the other, or cared what we got. Why, I had a *doll!* Not that I mind, but—but—Miss Alice would have *known* I was too old for dolls. *She* picked out a story book because I liked to read about girls living in London; *she* knew.'

'Well, Ally, go to bed and to sleep, and we'll talk it over to-morrow, and maybe Mr. Anson will call,' said her mother. 'Leave out your frock, Etty, for me to sponge; that's a disgrace to a big girl like you, anyhow.'

Meanwhile, after the treat was over, a hurried discussion had been held about the culprits between Mr. Anson, Miss Walters, and the Rector. The latter had spoken strongly on the insubordination of the St. Michael's children, and Mr. Anson had excused them on the ground of a strange place, and numbers of others.

'And as for the Confirmation,' said Mr. Randall, 'we have had a great deal too much of hastily presented candidates in this place. Those three giddy girls had better be kept back another year. I will *not* have children swept in to swell the numbers without due regard to fitness.'

'I don't know much of the other two, but Alice Woodford is generally a quiet girl, and belongs to a most respectable family,' said Mr. Anson.

'Well, Alice Woodford seems quiet,' said Miss Walters; 'but she gives a great deal of trouble.'

'Better be on the safe side and keep them back,' said Mr. Randall; 'it will be a wholesome warning.'

The Rector, with eight or nine thousand souls to look after, could not possibly judge himself of the characters of his Sunday-school girls, and he had a great dislike to all success that would not stand strict testing.

Mr. Anson was young and zealous, very anxious to present a long Confirmation list, and afraid of discouraging anybody. He was conscious that he *had* swept in as many as he could, and even he could not be expected to know much about the school girls; while

Miss Walters, equally anxious to do her duty, could not help being far too young and inexperienced to be able to judge and manage girls whom she had not known from childhood; while who could be to blame for giving her such a responsibility when no one else would come forward for it? With short hands and most imperfect instruments the work of the Church on earth has often to be done. Who can wonder that good people are often exposed to the sort of injustice which now befell Alice Woodford, though the workers themselves may well pray to be guarded against it?

On the day after the school-treat, Mr. Anson, secretly thinking that his Rector had dealt hard measure, set out to make three calls on the rejected candidates.

At the first Mrs. Gore told him that she had only allowed Sylvia to be presented as a favour to the district lady who had called round so often, but that the girl preferred the Congregational, and she always let her children go where they got most good; she didn't herself hold with Confirmation.

Mr. Anson retired in very low spirits, thinking that the Rector's severity had lost a lamb from the fold, and a recruit from the army. Mrs. Jackson was offhand and cheerful. 'Well, her girl didn't seem to think much of the classes, 'twasn't the sort of teaching as she was used to, but there was many as would be glad to have Mary as a candidate. St. Michael's was not the *only* church in Dulworth; *she'd* gone a good deal lately to St. Mark's.'

Here would be another gap in the St. Michael's benches, and neither mother seemed to think it possible that her daughter could be to blame. Mr. Anson felt quite nervous by the time he got to Laura Terrace.

Mrs. Woodford was a little dry, but she was perfectly respectful, and when Mr. Anson said that he had called to speak about last night, she called the reluctant Alice out of the kitchen to listen, and said—

'If you please, sir, I think Alice got pushed into the corner with the boys by mistake, she's not a girl to put herself forward.'

'Perhaps,' said Mr. Anson. 'I am sure I am extremely sorry for the Rector's decision, but he seems to think that it will be better to wait another year, and though I said a word for you, Alice, I am sorry to say Miss Walters seems to have reason to complain of you.'

'Miss Walters doesn't like me,' said Alice hotly.

'Hush, Alice,' said her mother. 'What fault does Miss Walters find in her, sir?'

'Well, as far as I understand, she complains of unsteadiness in the class and insubordination, and on the whole, Alice is still young, and it will be better to wait till next year.'

'Well, sir, of course you are the judge; but I should like to know exactly why you think my girl unfit for Confirmation. Because to be put back is a thing she'll have to remember as a disgrace all her life,

though of course I wouldn't have her go up if she was unfit, for the world.'

Mr. Anson did not like to press the original points of bad behaviour at the treat, so he said rather vaguely that he hoped they wouldn't take it too seriously, Alice was young, and would be more attentive to her teacher in future. With such excellent parents he had no doubt that next year she would be ready. And then he took his leave, not prepossessed by Alice's manner, though her mother's was a pleasant change from his other visits.

But as the door shut behind him, Alice burst out into sobs and indignation. Turned back from Confirmation! Miss Alice, every one at home would know, and for being rough and noisy with the boys—the thing of all others that was hateful to her.

'Well!' said Etty, 'I think we'd better just leave off going to that stupid school, there's plenty of other Church ones where we can go, and Alice can send in her name fresh at St. Mark's. That's what Mary Jackson means to do. She says they'll ask no questions. All the same, Ally, Miss Alice would never have let you sit idle as you do in Miss Walters' class and never open your mouth.'

''Tis all different,' said Alice. 'Mother, do you think I could go to one of the gentlemen at St. Mark's or St Augustine's? It's not like going to chapel, it's a real Church, and I can never go to school here again.'

Mrs. Woodford did not answer. She was not unfamiliar, nor was Alice, either in fact or fiction, with the rejection of a Confirmation candidate; but at Roseberry no one had ever been brought forward without careful consideration and full knowledge, and in the story-books which she had read on the subject, the rejection, invariably just, had always worked for good in the end. Now Mrs. Woodford did not think that Alice deserved to be rejected, nor did she make light of the rejection. She thought the girl hardly used, and she was very indignant. But to obtain the rite, in defiance of her own clergy, she could not believe to be the way to bring a blessing on it, though perhaps to withdraw all the children from St. Michael's, and after a time begin fresh at another Church, might be the most agreeable course to her feelings.

'I don't see my way, Alice,' she said; 'but if I were you I'd think it over and see if there was anything in your behaviour to your teacher that Miss Alice wouldn't have approved of. Now, it's Lily's fine concert night, and if you cry any more you won't be fit to go to it.'

Alice did, however, cry till she had far too bad a headache for the concert, and her mother left her at home with the little ones, and took Etty by herself.

It was a very grand affair. There was a large audience, mostly of the lower middle-class, for this Choral Society was under no very distinguished patronage. The stewards rushed about, important and busy, the young ladies sang their best, and looked their prettiest in

their blue and red ribbons. The soloists were *all* encored without distinction, except that the comic songs were encored *twice*. Nothing could have been a greater success, and everybody was ready to begin another series of hard practices.

The audience were well pleased, and went home provided with a subject of conversation, and having, at any rate, felt what it was to have their feelings stirred by something outside the narrowness of their daily life.

They had a pride in the performance, since the performers were their own friends and relatives, and Mrs. Woodford could not but own that the Choral Society had given them a very pleasant evening.

CHAPTER VII.

THE TRIALS OF A TEACHER.

Miss Walters lived alone with her mother, who was the widow of an officer, in a small house in the St. Michael's district. She was a bright ambitious girl, and when she had just come to Dulworth, a year or two before, had thought her talents cruelly wasted on the various odds and ends of work assigned to her by the established parish workers, and on the class of little girls which were handed over to her in the Sunday-school. When in a few months the new district had been assigned to Mr. Anson, he, being new himself, was very glad of the sympathy of other new-comers who did not regard his novelty as a crime, and he felt that he had found valuable workers in Mrs. and Miss Walters; while they, on their side, were ready to give any amount of work in return for importance and recognition. For nobody knew very much about the Walters, who were poorly off, and most of the authoritative ladies of Dulworth were people of some position, who liked to keep the work in their own hands, or to assign it to well-known middle-class helpers.

Mr. Anson, therefore, had no difficulty in finding a following, and nothing could have been more socially as well as morally delightful to the young district, than to make a great success and astonish their elders and betters. Spite of this little bit of base motive, they all set honestly and energetically to work, and spite of their many mistakes, stirred up an interest in Church matters, which was at least a stage above apathy. Of course, the first Confirmation after the separation was a very interesting occasion, and the length of their list was a subject of great pride; but Mr. Anson's choice could hardly be other than haphazard, and none of the ladies who helped him had any real knowledge of the young women, and still less of the lads of the district. Neither he nor they were people of exceptional talent or exceptional holiness, they themselves were raw and imperfect as well as their surroundings; but they read of Father Lowder or other great lights, and they did not see, when they worked so hard, why the same

exceptional success should not follow them. But as Mr. Anson's candidates were not very regular in attending his classes, not particularly impressed by his teaching, and, in short, not in the least out of the common way, the sting of the Rector's decision was severe.

Miss Walters could not help feeling personally aggrieved by the three girls who had done her such discredit, and who evidently cared so little for her, and she really felt that sort of annoyance with Alice Woodford which is the snare of teachers towards uncongenial pupils, while the strictures she passed on 'that ridiculous place, Roseberry, where they spoiled people to such a degree,' were unmodified by any knowledge that Dr. Goodall had been for the last thirty years regarded as one of the lights of the Church.

She poured out her sorrows to a friend with whom she went to drink tea on the day after the treat, and was thus consoled.

'Oh, girls are always disgusting. I hate them. Boys are my line. They're so much nicer.'

'And can you keep the boys in order?' asked Ethel Walters enviously.

'Oh, well, I don't think *order* matters when they like you. One mustn't mind their high spirits. Sometimes they flip peas at me, and once they tied the fringe of my mantle to my chair; but, you know, they're fond of me. When I went away they said, "they couldn't abear the teacher who came instead of me, she let them have no fun, and she weren't good-looking enough." Of course it was very rude of them, but still it's a great thing when they like one.'

'But I don't quite see,' said Miss Walters, 'the good of their liking one, if it dosen't make them learn and behave properly.'

'Oh, not if they're girls, of course; but boys must be won through their affections.'

Miss Walters did not exactly see the distinction. She had thought a great deal of winning the girls' affections; and as she recalled the tree the night before, she could not help thinking that a little more obedience, even if less affection, might have been very desirable on the part of the boys.

Her standard of success was not a very high one; but she felt that she had not reached it. Had she better give it all up?

She was partly consoled, and partly made to feel still more vague dissatisfaction by a meeting with Mr. Anson, who threw all the blame on circumstances, and on the unreasonable expectations of the Rector. However, both the superintendents repaired to school on Sunday morning, with a renewed determination to be as strict and severe as possible, Miss Walters feeling that the absence of the three culprits would make her hard task easier.

Behold, on the first class bench sat Alice Woodford, looking very miserable, and rather ill-tempered, but there in her place, with her lessons perfectly learnt, though she could hardly get out her voice to

say them, and if anything, less unspoken opposition in her mien than usual.

When a night's rest had given time for reflection, Mrs. Woodford had decided that she could not allow Alice to present herself for Confirmation elsewhere; but as for the Sunday-school she really could not tell what was best. Clearly it was very badly managed, and possibly going there did the children as much harm as good. Certainly she would not send them without Alice. They would not be admitted to the Parish Sunday-school, seeking for another one was unpleasant to her country loyalty, and staying away for a few weeks, and then slowly dribbling back again, was a line of conduct which, though not unknown at Roseberry, was associated in her mind with very foolish mothers indeed.

'Let me go down to St. Mark's with Mary Jackson, mother,' said Esther; ''twill do just as well. And the treats is far better managed.'

'Don't let her, mother,' entreated Alice, at the first opportunity. 'You don't know how she carries on with Mary Jackson and Sylvia Gore. They were beckoning the boys up the stairs last Sunday. You know I told you the school was spoiling us.'

Mrs. Woodford sighed, and remained doubtful. In the meantime Alice, in the first flush of her trouble, had sat down and poured it all out in a letter to her own dear young lady; who in her strange London home was moved to indignation, and even to tears, on behalf of her child, and repaid Miss Walters' views of Roseberry, with interest, on St. Michael's, Dulworth. She had too much sense, however, to show mischievous sympathy, and though in her answer she allowed Alice the dignity of a severe trial, she counselled submission, and even went so far as to say that she herself found it difficult to deal with strange girls, and that if, as Alice admitted, she had never answered Miss Walters' questions, that young lady could not possibly have a favourable impression 'either of her sense or her industry. 'I am very sorry for you, dear Alice, and no one who knew you would think you could behave rudely at the treat; but, really, from what you say yourself, I think at the classes you must have seemed very like Melinda Stubbs.'

At this reference, Alice laughed through her tears, for Melinda Stubbs was a girl who had once spent six months with an aunt at Roseberry, and had never been known to speak on any educational occasion for the whole time. As Miss Alice Goodall and her head girls had shared in the vain effort to melt the stranger, her silence had passed into a proverb among them. Alice was conscious that she had been far too like Melinda Stubbs.

She also felt a responsibility towards Violet Almond, who declared at once that she could never go to Confirmation Classes without Alice, and that if people were so unkind it would be better to have nothing to do with them. 'But I will help you all the same at home, Violet,' said Alice, 'and I couldn't bear to keep you back.'

'I'll go somewhere else, perhaps, where you go,' said Violet. 'I don't think the Rector can be at all a nice gentleman. As mamma says, Sunday-schools and public classes aren't the thing for young ladies.'

The result of all these influences working on the instincts of her bringing-up and training finally sent Alice to her mother on Saturday night, saying—

'Mother, I think I'd better go to school to-morrow. Miss Alice says so.'

'Well, Alice, I think it's for the best you should. But if I hear tales of the younger ones misbehaving, I may have to speak to Mr. Anson, and then it'll be for father and me to judge if it's better to make a change.'

'I wish we were back at Roseberry,' said Alice, with renewed tears.

'There, Alice, 'tis no use saying that, and when words is no use, 'tis much better not to say them.'

Mrs. Woodford did know, as few mothers in her class do, that it would be very bad for her children to give them a triumph over the constituted authorities; but her allegiance was weakened, and she felt that she would be glad of any excuse for making a change.

Alice was a little reconciled to the decision, by finding that Mary Jackson's mother, on her application to the St. Mark's clergy, had told them first, that her girl had such a liking to their church that she couldn't abear to go anywhere else. (Whereas Mary ran about with any companion she could find to half the 'places of worship' in Dulworth, and had even been heard to remark that 'she'd try the Catholic to-night, for a change.')

When there was still a demur, Mrs. Jackson had glibly declared that her girl was going to service in that part of the town, and that the St. Michael's classes were inconvenient; but never said a word about Mary's dismissal from there.

Alice felt that to come to Confirmation with a lie in her right hand would be too shocking; but she still had her trials. Miss Walters was much annoyed at the loss of her two scholars, and school matters did not improve.

Alice was not at all tempted by Sylvia Gore's account of how much they made of her at the Congregational; but the temptation was brought before her in quite another form.

Violet Almond persisted in staying away from the classes, and poor Alice was miserable to think that either her fault or her misfortune was depriving another of a privilege, and while she was still sore-hearted and angry, she was attacked on the subject by Lotty Benson.

Lotty was far the steadiest and most thoughtful girl with whom Alice was acquainted in Dulworth, she would have scorned to run after treats, and, indeed, the 'Bible Christians' were not in a position

to afford her many. But she was a very important person in her little community, and told Alice how she had been moved at their meetings to 'engage in prayer,' with many particulars about her 'conversion,' which she attributed to a certain Christian lady whom she had heard at a great revival meeting, in the very room where the Choral Society's concert had lately been held. She begged Alice not to fret about empty forms, but to come and hear 'the Word' for herself, and said a great deal which, though not couched exactly in the language used by any of Alice's teachers, was familiar to her in many story books, and in which she could not exactly detect a flaw, and to which, as she had never been taught controversially, she could find no answer. Lotty was so much more religious than any of her companions at the Church school, or than even she herself was aware of being, that Alice could not fail to respect her, and the conscientious child puzzled herself much over the question; while the lighter Etty was more and more inclined to yield to Polly Mason's entreaties 'just to come over and see what a handsome class-room we have at the Congregational, and what well-dressed young ladies attend it.' Etty was only restrained by the habits of obedience in which her mother had trained her. Mrs. Woodford kept the control over her children, as if she had been a lady, and Etty had happily not yet awoke to the knowledge that working-girls of her age were practically almost independent. She was only naughty and inattentive at St. Michael's; while Alice, feeling, without being able to explain, how utterly unimpressed all the Church girls in the Confirmation Class seemed by their privileges, and what a light-minded set they were, felt herself growing to have a real respect for Lotty—began to wonder if she herself was 'converted,' and to think how she should ever make up her mind to tell Miss Alice, if she found it her duty to join the Bible Christians.

(To be continued.)

CAMEOS FROM ENGLISH HISTORY.

CAMEO CCXLVI.

1664–1667.

WAR AND PESTILENCE.

It would have seemed as though the Dutch Republic must have been the natural ally of England; but, on the contrary, in the early and middle parts of the seventeenth century there was the most bitter dislike between the two countries, chiefly from colonial rivalries, and from the recollection of the Amboyna massacre.

The politics of the Seven Provinces were very complicated, and had much effect on the state of Europe at this time. They were Holland, Zeeland, Guelderland, Utrecht, Overyssel, Groningen, and Friesland. Each of these a separate republic in itself, and each city with its own municipal government. Each province had its own States, composed of deputies, and the management of the Union was in the hands of the States-General, consisting of deputies from each province, with a lesser council of state. The administration was chiefly in the hands of this, as it consisted partly of the permanent officers, such as the Grand Pensionary of Holland, and Treasurer-General. The Stadtholder, as representative of the nobility, had always had much influence, though not an essential part of the Constitution. Ever since the time of William the Silent the Stadtholder had been head of the Orange or Nassau family; but the infancy of the third William had prevented his being appointed, and Cromwell had made it an article of the treaty that no Prince of Orange should ever hold the office.

There were always two parties in the State, Holland and Amsterdam being strongly averse to exalt the house of Nassau; Zeeland and the other provinces being generally in its favour. The first was called the Lowestein party, the second the Orange; but Holland was so rich and prosperous as generally to outweigh the other six provinces, and the Grand Pensionary, John de Witt, was an exceedingly able man. His fear was of an Orange tyranny, and to prevent this he was willing to ally himself with France, and to oppose England as connected with the young Prince of Orange, now about fourteen.

The other States were more afraid of French ambition than Orange tyranny; but all were sore at the recent defeat, and anxious to retrieve their honour now that Blake was dead.

The possessions of the States were enormous in all the quarters of the world. They had numerous isles in the Southern Archipelago, as

well as factories in India, had began to settle in Guinea and at the Cape of Good Hope, owned several West Indian isles, and a settlement in Guiana, and had begun a colony in North America, close to that of the Pilgrim Fathers. Their merchant shipping was the finest in the world, and they had no rival on the seas save the English.

Causes of quarrel were by no means lacking. The treaty with Cromwell had not been performed, the island of Poleron in the East Indies had not been yielded, English merchant ships were continually seized and detained on false pretences, and there were constant quarrels and mutual injuries inflicted by the colonists of the two nations on the coast of Guinea, where each was trying to establish factories for trade in palm oil, gold dust, and unfortunately, for slaves. There was now an African Company, with the Duke of York at its head, as well as the East Indian Company, established in 1600, and both made loud complaints of the conduct of the Dutch. Sir George Downing was sent to the Hague to complain, and also to demand that the young Prince of Orange should be restored to the honours of his family. The Envoy was a haughty, overbearing man, who gave further offence; and in the meantime the African Company took the matter into their own hands and sent out Sir Robert Holmes with a small fleet to recover the Castle of Corse, which the Dutch had seized. In one of the Dutch vessels there taken papers were discovered showing that the Dutch Governor, Valkenberg, had incited the negro king of Fantine to attack the English fort at Cormantine, and he therefore considered himself justified not only in taking the island of Goree, off Cape Verde, but in destroying several more Dutch forts, after which he stretched across the Atlantic to the settlement in America, which had at first been English, but had since been colonised by the Dutch, who called it New Netherlands, and the capital New Amsterdam. Fresh arrivals of English emigrants threw the balance to their side, and in 1664 the inhabitants, on the arrival of Sir Robert Nicolas with a fleet, overcame the resistance of Governor Stuyvesant, commonly called Headstrong Peter, and made him surrender. The province was given to the King's brother, after whom the capital was called New York, but for many generations the Dutch habits and language prevailed in the country around. Here Holmes seems to have thought it well to wait and see whether his daring deed was to be avowed or not.

The Dutch Ambassador loudly complained, and Charles gave orders that Holmes should be arrested and sent to the Tower till he could clear himself. The Admiral surrendered, and showed such papers that the King thought him fully justified, released him, and when the connivance at the negro attack on the African fort was denied, Charles replied that 'he had as full evidence of it as that there was such a fort.'

There was great anger in Holland, but the States-General were always slow of decision upon a war, and none could be legally undertaken without their formal sanction, when of course any public debates must at once become known to Sir George Downing. De Ruyter was in the Mediterranean, where he had been going on with Blake's work of overawing the Moorish corsairs, and the object of the Grand Pensionary was to send him instructions to recover the forts. De Witt therefore concerted his measures with seven devoted friends, and when the States-General met, he began with a number of dry formal bills which had to be read and signed as a matter of course, and were likely to be gone through without attention or discussion.

When well embarked in this roll, the seven deputies began upon those likely to be in opposition. Some were called outside to be told of a secret, others walked up and down the hall to converse on the subject known to interest them most, some lured to the windows to see what was going on in the square outside, even the President engaged in conversation, and then, while no one was listening, De Ruyter contrived that the secretary should gabble through the authorisation to make reprisals on the English in the very same dreary voice in which he had been reading the mere forms, so that nobody knew what was going on, nobody objected, and the authorisation was signed and sealed, and sent off by special messenger overland to meet De Ruyter.

The English Admiral Lawson was also in the Mediterranean, closely watching De Ruyter, though polite messages passed between the two Admirals, and the Dutch fleet, to disarm suspicion, sailed up and down for three weeks, through the Straits of Gibraltar, collecting stores for his expedition from the Spanish ports, but only purchasing a little at a time so as to excite no suspicion. Not one of his captains knew what he intended, till on the 5th of October, 1664, he had passed the English fleet lying in Cadiz Bay, and exchanged a friendly farewell with Lawson, who fully believed that he was going home.

Two days later he hoisted the white flag which summoned the captains on board his ship the *Spiegel*, and told them of his instructions, sailing straight for Goree, where he found nine English merchantmen. All had to surrender, as well as the fort.

On one of these islands the sailors were much surprised at finding a negro able to speak Dutch, having been a slave taken to Flushing. On hearing the Admiral's name, he exclaimed, 'Michiel De Ruyter, I remember a cabin boy of that name at Flushing!'

When told that it was the same, he was incredulous, but being taken on board the *Spiegel*, there was a delighted recognition on either side, and much laughter over old pranks which the two lads had shared. The black could still repeat the names of all the streets, buildings, and bridges in Flushing, and the names and nicknames of of all his old comrades there. He had been baptized, still knew the

Lord's Prayer and the Catechism, and said that he had tried to instruct his children in the Christian Faith, but that they would only laugh in his face. His intelligence had made him chief in his island, and he would not hear of going back to the civilised world, though he was much pleased with a present of some old uniforms, and a salute of honour which was fired as he returned to his savage home.

De Ruyter then cruised along the African coast, recapturing the forts that had lately been taken by Holmes; but he had a very sharp conflict at Fort Cormantin, where the English were assisted by a negro army under a terrible savage, who had a bitter hatred to the Dutch, and exercised such barbarities that he was so much afraid of falling into their hands as to commit suicide, when he found the English cause hopeless. The garrison were all made prisoners, and De Ruyter sailed for America, and appeared before Barbadoes, but met such a fire from the forts as drove him away with great damage. On his way back he heard reports that war had been declared, and not thinking the channel a safe route, sailed by way of the North Sea.

It had not been long before Admiral Lawson discovered how he had been duped. He sent intelligence to the Duke of York, who immediately sent out two fleets, one under Prince Rupert, and 150 Dutch merchant vessels were captured, and guarded in the English harbours to be sold by way of indemnification to any sufferers by Ruyter's expedition.

Meantime Charles wrote to his Ambassador at the Hague to inquire into the matter, and Downing, in his conceit, answered that there could be no such expedition, as if there were, he must have heard of it. Charles wrote again, and Sir George was obliged to go to the Grand Pensionary, whom he asked coolly whether the story of De Ruyter's voyage were true. De Witt smiled, and assured him the Province of Holland had given the Admiral no orders that need concern his master, and as to the States-General, it was useless to say anything about their resolutions since his Excellency always knew what took place there!

Again Downing wrote that it was a baseless report, and that De Ruyter was in the Mediterranean! However, certain news had come by this time. He was very much enraged, and desired to be recalled to London, where he found himself blamed and laughed at for his conceit!

War was inevitable, and Charles had to raise money for it, to the amount of two millions and a half; but the nation was hot against the Dutch, and on this occasion the old mode of raising money by subsidies was exchanged for a quarterly assessment on the counties—in fact, bringing in, in 1664, the system of taxation which has continued ever since in force. The clergy had hitherto voted their own subsidies in Convocation, which was held to be the third estate of the realm; but apparently for convenience' sake, Archbishop

Sheldon, who had just succeeded Juxson, came to an agreement that the clergy should be taxed like the laity for the future, little guessing that he thus gave up a very important element of influence. There was now no necessity to keep Convocation sitting until the grant had been made, and thus much of its strength was lost as a power in the kingdom.

The navy was really dear to both Charles and James, and they threw themselves into the preparations with great zeal, so as to fit out the grandest navy England had ever seen. The Duke of York was a thorough sailor, and sought out Blake's old captains; but when the Duke of Buckingham and other courtly friends offered their services, he replied that they might serve as volunteers, but that he could give no command to the inexperienced. He seems to have been the first person to understand that seamanship did not come by nature, and that all generals were not qualified for admirals; and he divided the fleet into three squadrons, known by their flags; the red under himself, the white under Prince Rupert, the blue under the Earl of Sandwich. His own vessel was the *Royal Charles*, and with ninety-eight sail of the line and four fine ships he sailed up and down the German Ocean, defying the Hollanders.

The Dutch were in the meantime quarrelling as to the command of their fleet. Before the great battle of the Texel the States-General had voted that in case of the death of Van Tromp the command should devolve upon Evertsen; but his retreat in that battle had displeased the States, and besides, he was a Zeelander and an Orangeman. The admiralship was at first given to Cornelis de Witt, who had been killed during the war with Sweden and Holland. John de Witt, then appointed as High Admiral, Opdam van Wassenaer, a brave cavalry officer, but no sailor, and always sea-sick. All the other provinces, Zeeland at their head, made Evertsen Vice-Admiral; but as a matter of party, Holland appointed three more Lieutenant-Admirals, Cortenaer, De Ruyter, and Meppel, evidently to prevent Evertsen, though senior, being sixty-five years old, from coming to the front. After much squabbling, the fleet put out on the 24th of May, 1665, 103 ships, with 4800 guns and 21,000 men, and on the 11th of June came in sight of the English under the Duke of York, with 109 ships, 4200 guns, and about the same number of men as their opponents.

The Hollanders were so much resolved that Evertsen should have no opportunity of distinguishing himself, that they gave explicit instructions to their Admiral for the battle, and having some secret doubts of his ability, they continued to urge him on to make the attack, so that he felt himself insulted. He was altogether at a loss, yet he held no council of war, and made the signal for attack suddenly on the 13th of June, just as the wind had turned in favour of the English, and when the Vice-Admirals, instead of being at the head of their squadrons, all had their ships near him, and in

a position whence signals could not be seen by a great portion of the fleet. The huge fleets covered the sea for a mile or more off Lowestoff.

The English fleet advanced in excellent order, drawn up half-moon fashion. The two fleets slowly sailed past each other with a tremendous cannonade, but the wind and the weight of the guns enabled the English to inflict more damage than they received. At 5 A.M. next morning the two fleets tacked, and again passed each other firing, and in this encounter the Lieutenant-Admiral Cortenaer was killed. A third time the manœuvre was repeated, but the Dutch ships, for want of efficient command, were so entangled with one another that all could not fire, and there was a gap in the line, into which Lord Sandwich rushed, breaking their fleet in two. In the confusion Wassenaer brought his flagship, the *Eendraght*, close alongside of the *Royal Charles*, and there was a most fearful exchange of broadsides. Three of the noble volunteers, Lords Falmouth and Muskerry, and young Boyle, were killed beside the Duke of York, who was bespattered with their blood. At one moment the *Royal Charles* was almost boarded, but another English ship came up to her relief, and James, watching the confusion on board the *Eendraght*, commanded all his guns to be discharged into her in succession, and at the third shot from the lower tier there was a fearful explosion. The *Eendraght* had been blown up with the Admiral of the Fleet, and 500 men, all of whom were lost. In the horror that followed, the captain of Cortenaer's ship, still bearing the flag of the dead or dying Admiral, turned and fled, and several followed him. Some ships fought desperately till burnt. Evertsen, as senior Admiral, hoisted a flag, and signalled to collect the fleet, and his own ship was terribly damaged. Cornelis, son of the great Van Tromp, also tried to stop the flight, but was not ready to obey Evertsen; and when the Texel was signalled for, he turned towards the Meuse.

The English gave chase, but in the night slackened sail at a signal from the *Royal Charles*. It turned out that a servant of the Duke's, named Bronkhard, who had been in mortal terror all through the fight, actually forged this order to Captain Penn as soon as his master had fallen asleep, to prevent the battle from being renewed! However, eighteen ships had been taken and seven destroyed, 7000 men killed, and four admirals. Indeed, this battle of Lowestoff was one of the greatest of our naval victories, since the Dutch were more equal antagonists by sea to the English than any other nation; but exultation was almost forgotten in dismay at the ravages of the plague.

This horrible malady is apparently an extremely rapid fever, accompanied by a huge carbuncle, or plague-spot, as it was called, and is one of the disorders that thrive upon the foulness and filth of unwholesome cities. The Turkish cities of Asia Minor seemed to

be its home, whence it sallied out from time to time—the infection being brought sometimes by persons, but more often in clothes and other goods—and overrunning western cities during the summer and autumn months with such fatal effect, that it came to be known above all other diseases as *the* plague.

Dr. Hodges, who watched throughout the visitation in London, traced the contagion to Holland, whence it had come from Turkey. There is also a narrative by Daniel Defoe, the author of 'Robinson Crusoe,' hung upon a fictitious 'London Citizen,' but borne out in all its details of fact by other authorities, such as public records, and the diaries of the excellent John Evelyn at Wotton and Says Court, and of Samuel Pepys, one of the clerks at the Admiralty. Before the beginning of the war, when trade was not interrupted, the plague had broken out in Amsterdam, but was hushed up, and in the end of 1664 two men had died in Long Acre. It went smouldering on through the winter, and in the third week in January no less than 474 persons had died of it in the two parishes of St. James's and St. Giles's. Then the disease slackened, but never ceased, though no great alarm was taken till the end of May, when the number of fatal cases became so alarming that every one who could, began to remove.

The Court and all the officials retreated to Oxford, leaving only Lord Albemarle behind to conduct the business of Government, and the gentry and wealthy persons fled. Indeed, the whole neighbourhood took alarm, and the Lord Mayor refused to grant certificates of health, without which people could not leave the town. The absence of so many increased the distress; whole streets were deserted, 40,000 servants were thrown out of place, artisans and labourers had no employment, and distress added to the danger.

The King subscribed £1000 per week for the relief of these sufferers, the City £600; the Queen Dowager, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and others gave largely, nor did the magistrates desert their posts. They did their best, dividing the parishes into districts, and appointing officers over them as searchers, nurses, and watchers. Each infected house was shut up, with a red cross marked on the door, or the words 'Lord, have mercy on us.' Provisions were brought to the inmates, and at night a dead cart went round with torches and a bell to bear away corpses to a great common grave without religious rites. Only the lowest and vilest were employed in this fearful office, and their brutality was another element of misery and horror.

Those months were like a nightmare on the devoted city. Strange fancies prevailed. The almanacks were full of portents. One half-crazy man ran about shouting the words of Jonah, 'Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be destroyed.' Another wandered, half-naked, with looks of horror, crying, 'Oh, the great and dreadful God!' Voices were thought to be heard in the air, flaming swords, hearses and coffins to be seen in the sky, and at the same time there were all manner of

quack antidotes and charms sold as infallible protections. One was a bit or parchment inscribed thus:

ABRACADABRA
ABRACADABR
ABRACADA
ABRACAD
ABRACA
ABRAC
ABRA
ABR
AB
A

Medical skill was at fault, indeed, many of the physicians died, and the only conclusion to which they came was that if the boil or carbuncle broke and suppurated, the patient recovered; but this, during the summer months, was the exception.

The clergy too did their utmost. There were daily prayers, and the churches open all day, but with the smitten houses shut up there could be no visiting the sick and dying. Indeed, many of the clergy died of the infection, while both they and the ejected Presbyterians strove to comfort and minister as far as they were permitted. People were going in one by one all day to the churches to pray, and there were assemblies, prayers, and exhortation at the meeting-houses; but there were others who gave themselves up recklessly to mirth and revelry, and mocked these devotional exercises. One party, rioting in a tavern just opposite to one of the churches, is specially mentioned as horrifying every one by their profanity, for three or four days. Then in a fortnight's time, all of them were carried to the great pit beyond the town, where torches burnt around all night, and bodies were shot out of the carts like rubbish.

August and September brought the height of the misery. Those who fell sick in those months never recovered, even though the weather became cooler. The largest number of deaths in one week was about ten thousand, in that ending on the 29th of August. Very large fires of coal in every street were thought to purify the air, but rain did more, and the equinoctial gales began to lessen the infection. Recoveries became frequent, and though cases continued all the winter, the terrible visitation was gradually passing away. The numbers of deaths are computed at not less than 100,000.

The pestilence had not been confined to London. The fugitives carried it to other towns; York, Norwich, Salisbury, Winchester, all had their share, either that year or the next. Narrow streets and tall houses with no sufficient drainage could not but foster it, and there were cases enough to cause the cities to be isolated, and the payment for provisions made outside the gates by placing the money in a pail of water or in vinegar.

(To be continued.)

PREPARATION OF PRAYER-BOOK LESSONS.

XXXIX.

FUNERAL RITES.

Susan. I should like to begin with hearing the old original customs of burial. The early Christians, I know, had the Catacombs, and gave up burning their dead.

Aunt Anne. It was an expensive process, and only used for the wealthy; and, indeed, I think the Roman chiefly adopted it out of imitation of the Greeks, because thus it had a sort of classical and poetical flavour.

S. What do you think of this modern movement in favour of cremation? Is it contravening the faith in the Resurrection?

A. Not quite that, since 'unto dust we must return' any way; and it makes no difference to the Power that shall make these dry bones live, whether the slow process of nature underground, or the more rapid one of fire have dissolved them. But I do think that the laying to sleep in God's Acre under the church's shade is a great assistance to the sense that 'he is not dead but sleepeth'; and I think that the burning is a certain outrage to the deserted temple, only permissible under dire necessity, as when the grateful men of Jabesh-gilead burnt the remains of Saul and Jonathan.

S. The Jews used their rocky caves, full of long galleries and branches.

A. From Abraham downwards, as we well know. In Egypt, they would have seen the great ceremonies accompanying funeral rites—the embalming, which was thought essential to a resurrection.

S. And which makes that destruction of mummies which goes on now such a horrid outrage on the dead.

A. So I feel. Then you know there was that remarkable judgment on the deeds of the dead which took place before the mummy was ferried over by the boatman, the real original Charon, to the sacred isle, all strongly evincing faith in immortality. But those who prepared the body for embalming became unclean; and, as you know, among the Israelites, touching a body, a bone, or even a grave, produced legal uncleanness, requiring seclusion and purification by the water of separation.

S. I remember. That was made with the ashes of a heifer, and applied with hyssop. The uncleanliness was because death was produced by sin, and the corpse was, as it were, the token of Satan's

dominion over man; but all that changed with the Resurrection of our Blessed Lord.

A. Even as the word for death became decease—departure. The body of the baptized Christian was thenceforth the garment laid aside for a time, to be renewed and resumed, therefore to be treated with all reverence. Nay, it is more, for it has been the Temple of God the Holy Ghost, and thus the care of the dead became no longer a necessary act involving uncleanness, but one of the acceptable works of mercy. A Jew would have thought it profane to worship in the Catacombs; a Christian felt them hallowed by the remains of saints and martyrs enshrined around. Thus it was that when the Church emerged from persecution, the whole care of the dead rested on the clergy. The Bishop came to the house and anointed and saluted the body, using certain prayers and hymns, and then, after a last kiss had been given by all the kindred, either the nearest male relatives or an order of brethren carried the corpse forth on an open bier, arranged in its best clothes.

S. The Greeks still, I know, keep the wedding-dress of a bride untouched for her funeral. What a strange contrast the wearer must often be! And what a strange chastening thought, when dressing for the wedding, 'I shall not wear this again till I am arrayed for my grave!'

A. I have seen somewhere that the same custom is observed by the men in one of the Austrian provinces.

S. And in Scotland even, the nearest relation lifts the head, though every other such custom has been lost there.

A. The diggers of graves were also a special order, and the priests walked beside the bier, chanting Psalms and hymns, and carrying lamps or wax lights, for burials almost always took place at night. At St. Monica's funeral, the Psalm was the 89th: 'My song shall be of mercy and judgment.' There were various different arrangements of funeral Psalms, and the Roman use ended by appointing the *Miserere* (our 51st) and the Songs of Degrees, thus taking in the 121st, so especially suitable for one to be left with the Lord for his keeper, where the sun shall not burn thee by day, neither the moon by night.

S.

'Fear no more the heat of the sun,
Nor the furious winter's rages;
Thou thy wordly task hast done,
Thou hast gone home and ta'en thy wages.'

Is not the singing on the way kept up in some places?

A. Yes, in the northern counties; and I believe in Wales, I have heard people say that nothing could be more beautiful than the effect of the Psalms sung by powerful voices coming pealing on the wind from the mountain roads. The custom has been revived elsewhere, the *Dies Iræ* (translated of course), or 'Safe Home,' a translation of Dr. Neale's from the Greek, being sung on the way.

S. Was the first part of the service, the taking the body into Church, as we do?

A. A Celebration was always a part of the funeral; but when the church and cemetery were not close together, I think the actual burial took place separately. Indeed, I believe that the habit of most Roman Catholic countries is to finish the service at the church and leave the real interment entirely to the grave-diggers, a plan which does not always result in reverence or decency. From St. Augustine's description of his mother's funeral, it would appear that the Celebration took place beside the grave, before the body was placed in it. All the old Sacramentaries had Collects, Epistles, and Gospels, and other lections for the funeral, and this Special Eucharist was called the 'Requiem,' from the first words of the anthem, '*Requiem æternam dona eis, Domine, et lux perpetua luceat eis*' (Grant to them eternal rest, and let perpetual light shine on them).

S. Oh! I never understood what was the Requiem. And what was the Dirge?

A. That followed the burial. It was the special office for the dead, from the first words of an anthem from Psalm v. 8: '*Dirige in conspectu tuo viam meam*' (Direct my ways in Thy sight). This might be said privately, and was included in the Primer, the prayer-book of tolerably educated people.

S. And it was all changed at the Reformation.

A. Not so very much at first. In 1549 there was still a Communion for the dead, with the 42nd Psalm for Introit, a Collect we still retain, 1 Thessalonians iv., St. Paul's prophecy of the resurrection of the dead as Epistle, and as Gospel, our Blessed Lord's own words in St. John vi., ending with 'I will raise him up at the last day.'

S. And was that all done away with?

A. All except the Collect.

S. Was it because of the old abuses?

A. Chiefly. We must, in censuring and regretting the change, recollect how much there had been to provoke popular indignation. There were an immense number of needy clergy. Though the wealth of the great Prelates and of the Abbeys was considerable, and the parish priests were sufficiently well off for single men, there were crowds of very ignorant ones, scarcely able to do more than repeat the offices without necessarily understanding them, and dependant for subsistence upon fees and alms. These had every temptation unscrupulously to strain to the uttermost every doctrine or practice that could bring them profit. Now the Catholic belief has always been that the Christians living and departed are alike included and benefited by the pleading in the Holy Eucharist of the one Great Sacrifice, and therefore the early Christians had a mass on the third, seventh, and fortieth day at the grave, sometimes on the ninth, and often on the anniversary. The old English Church recommended masses for thirty days—the month's mind, as it was called—and also

anniversary masses with the intention 'of recommending the deceased to the mercy and redemption of Christ.'

S. I thought it was to free the soul from purgatory, and that each mass was supposed to take off a certain time.

A. That was the popular notion impressed by these clergy, who had come to believe it themselves. The original opinion seems to have been that the soul, except in the case of the newly-baptized infant, or where there is unusual holiness, must need some purifying before entering upon the full bliss of Paradise, even though in full communion with the Church and in a state of grace. And how much more those penitent only just at the last after a course of habitual sin, hardening and degrading!

S. Yes; it does seem as if it must be so with many.

A. Whether by actual suffering, or by what process, the earlier, more humble, less ignorant Christians did not attempt to say, but they kept up the Jewish custom of praying for the dead.

S. Did the Jews pray for the dead?

A. Yes. They had, and still have, a very beautiful synagogue prayer for the departed. There is evidence of the Jewish beliefs in the second book of Maccabees, ch. xii., when speaking of the offering Judas Maccabæus sent to Jerusalem for the slain: 'For if he had not hoped that they which were slain should have risen again, it had been superfluous and vain to pray for the dead. Wherefore he made a reconciliation for the dead that they might be delivered from sin.'

S. That is very remarkable, though it is not of authority, I suppose, as if it were in the canonical books.

A. Certainly not. And it has the air of being the argument of a Pharisee with the Sadducees; but it shows the belief in which St. Paul was brought up.

S. But is there any more direct authority for such prayers in the New Testament?

A. Only by deduction. Onesiphorus, for whom St. Paul imprecates grace and mercy in the day of the Lord (2 Tim. i. 18), is thought to have been dead, since his household are greeted without him. Also when he bids the Ephesians use supplication for all saints.

S. But the saints often meant living Christians.

A. I confess that I do not think either of these Scripture passages so conclusive that I could condemn a person for doubting them; but, on the other hand, Infant Baptism and the observance of Sunday have little more absolute authority from the New Testament, apart from the practice of the primitive and universal Church, and this, the prayers for the departed had from the first, being, as I said, a custom inherited from the Jews, and never condemned by our Blessed Lord Himself. They were not thought to alter the final condition after the Day of Judgment, but to bring additional joy and blessing to those in the intermediate state, and to assist in the purification of their imperfections, especially when penitence had come very late.

S. You think that is the Catholic doctrine, and one that we may rightly hold?

A. I do, It has been held by many of our most thoroughly Anglican divines. I remember at this moment Bishop Andrewes, who gives a form in his devotions, and Bishop Heber, from whom there is extant a beautiful letter to a friend who could not bear to leave out the names of dear ones in prayer.

S. I cannot think how it could be given up.

A. The material imaginations of the mediæval times must needs fix the mode of purification, and could only conceive of it as physical torture.

S. Like Dante's scenes. Well, but there is the description of the rich man to justify them.

A. Certainly there is; also 'the fire shall try every man's work' (1 Cor. iii. 13). But remember that the story of the rich man was in some degree a parable, and his anguish may be only made perceptible to our senses by the image of flame. What that would be to our body, his suffering was to his disembodied spirit, must, I think, be the way of understanding it. However, the nobler spirits beheld in their notion of purgatory, hopeful, willingly endured, refining sufferings, brightened by prayers and trust.

S. As Dante found a verse of the penitential psalms on each step.

A. And as Bishop Ridley said he would rather be in Purgatory than in Little Ease, for then he would be sure of not falling from grace. But the grosser spirits believed in and represented horrid flames, with demons tormenting those within, painted them on chapel walls, preached about them, and appealed to the mourning relations to pay for prayers and masses for their relief. Chantries were endowed for perpetual prayers for relatives with bands of priests and bedesmen, for as no priest can say more than one mass a day, the rich engaged numbers of persons to do so. Then, again, they were taught that the very smallest observance, such as a daily 'Ave Maria,' or an Absolution at the point of death, would bring a sinner into Purgatory after almost any amount of wickedness; and then the shortening of his term was a matter of masses and prayers, which came to mean money from his kindred.

S. Yes, of course, there was a great revulsion of feeling against such abuses.

A. So the Reformers, finding how little Bible authority there is for all this system, swept the whole away. They disbelieved altogether the idea of any alteration after death, disregarded the intermediate state altogether, and considered that the soul became instantly fit for eternal joy, or entered on final punishment. The confusion between Heaven and Paradise, which pervades so much of our popular literature, began then.

S. And they thought it profane and superstitious to pray for the dead.

A. So much so that our old clerk was quite miserable when our Vicar forgot, and mentioned the Prince Consort after his death. And thus the Puritans would fain have sent the corpse to the grave without a single word of faith to be uttered there.

S. As in Scotland now.

A. However, feeling in England was too sound for them, and they only prevailed so far as to have the Eucharist left out.

S. But not forbidden. It is often celebrated now, only with the week's Epistle and Gospel, instead of the proper ones, adapted to the occasion, and so beautiful.

SHORT ESSAYS.

BY ELIZABETH M. SEWELL.

ESSAY III.

GOVERNMENT.

THESE are days of keen political interest. There is no word more frequently in our mouths than Government. But what does Government in its best sense mean? Is it the exertion of the absolute will of one for the good of the many, or is it the carrying out of the wishes of the majority? If it depends on the will of one, then that one ought to be perfect. If it is the carrying out of the wishes of the majority, then the majority ought to be, what they certainly are not, reasonable, calm judging, well informed, and unselfish. Some persons (and I am inclined to agree with them) say that in the present state of things the best government is likely to be that which allows the majority to choose their governors, but when chosen leaves the governors free to act according to their own independent knowledge and judgment. But these questions are too large to be discussed in a cursory manner. There is another kind of government directly concerning our home life which touches us all even more nearly—government in households, schools, and societies. Every one has some kind of experience of it. We are all amongst the governors or the governed. What is it then which constitutes good domestic or private government?

I question whether women as a rule are likely to answer this inquiry wisely. It seems to me to require a good deal of experience, and women are not often early trained by responsibility, and have not therefore learnt the lessons of failure or of success. They may be placed in a position of authority, and find that they cannot exercise that authority satisfactorily; or they may manage very well, and contrive to make the persons under them happy and obedient; but anyhow it appears to be a chance. They do not generally know why they failed, or why they succeeded; and the effects of their government on the tempers, tastes, and principles of the individuals governed are, I imagine, often looked upon as the result of circumstances beyond their control.

It might be helpful, I think, if some of the personal experiences both of governor and governee (is there such a word?) were collected as materials from which more certain laws on this subject of private government could be gathered, and as a few thoughts in reference

to it have from time to time suggested themselves to me, it may be worth while to note them down, if only to induce others to do likewise. Circumstances have compelled me to accept a good deal of responsibility at various times; if it were not so, I should never attempt to give an opinion about government.

The first thing that comes to me from observation and experience is, that persons who take great pleasure in governing others, are not likely to govern well, because they are tempted to make obedience to the individual command their direct object. Only the Divine Being is in a position to claim this absolute subjection.

A friend of mine once said to a very strict mother—who was lamenting the absence of affection in her children—'You have gained what you required—obedience.' Yes; but the mother had failed to win love, which she equally required. She had, I imagine, liked to be obeyed—to feel her own power—and the little niceties and considerations which would have softened her authority had been neglected. This result being in no way contemplated, was doubtless very bitter to her; but it was the natural consequence of the spirit in which she had ruled. It is the same with heads of households. If they exact strict obedience they will get it. The generality of mankind are willing to be governed, for when not subject to external authority, they are too frequently slaves to their own humours and fancies; and as self-discipline is more onerous than outward obedience, they readily make the easier choice; but whether this absolute authority is likely to be exercised wisely is very doubtful.

'Then'—it will probably be said—'you reject obedience.'

Quite the contrary. I believe the spirit of obedience to lie at the very foundation of duty and happiness. But we are speaking of the governor—not the governed. We are considering the temper of mind cultivated by the possession of power, when such power is desired and enjoyed.

We are not indeed answerable for our peculiar dispositions, and if we are so constituted as to enjoy power, we cannot help it, and it may be urged, there is no harm in the enjoyment. No harm certainly, but there is danger—danger to ourselves and to the wise exercise of our authority.

Power is responsibility. This I believe is the only safe way of regarding it, for responsibility involves the constant consideration of the claims of the governed, simply because 'we all have a Master in Heaven.'

Looked at from this point of view, power must be more or less burdensome, and I doubt if it can ever be really very enjoyable. Just at the first moment there may be a pleasant excitement, and a sense of superiority; but the moment duty appears on the scene, the excitement will be lessened, and the sense of shortcoming must take the place of self-gratulation.

For the first demand of good government is justice, and what can be more difficult than to be perfectly just? Persons with quick sympathies, when placed in authority, are sorely tempted to do what appears kind at the moment to those under them. The proverb, 'First come, first served,' is their natural principle of action. In cases of dispute or disagreement, the first appeal is listened to with interest, sympathy is expressed, and perhaps promises are made which, when the other side has been heard, it is found impossible to fulfil. Discontent and disappointment naturally follow.

Quick feeling and quick judgment are indeed some of the most fruitful sources of unwise government. It seems very hard and cold to be checking, and weighing, and guarding one's words, when a case is brought before one which may be, on the surface, perfectly clear and demanding instant action. Yet, for myself, I confess that I can never remember to have yielded to a momentary impulse, in reference to questions of complaint or dispute, and given a strong opinion, or issued an immediate order, without afterwards repenting it. I may have been right upon the whole; but I have constantly been wrong in detail, and so have found myself obliged in some degree to withdraw what I have said.

And when this is the case there is nothing to be done but to confess it. People are afraid of losing their authority by owning that they have made a mistake; I have never found this to be the case myself. In fact, the confession that one has been mistaken is such a difficult one to make, that when it is made it carries with it a sense of power rather than of weakness. It is a curious experiment to meet a person, excited by apparent injustice and loud in complaint, with the acknowledgment, 'You are right, the decision was wrong; I did not mean it to be unjust, but I decided hastily, and I am sorry for it.' There is something amusing in the surprise and powerlessness of the excited and injured party. The temptation then is to triumph in the consciousness of candour; and that, of course, must be guarded against. Present right does not neutralise past wrong; but anyhow, the acknowledgment of error helps to put crooked things straighter, though it may never make them straight.

Then again. One great desideratum as regards good government is the power of giving up power. We may be supreme, and so far we may rule well; but if we cannot cordially within certain limits yield a portion of that supremacy to our subordinates, we shall never really govern satisfactorily, for we shall never be able to secure their loyalty. I think this will be found to be the experience of every one who has been placed at the head of schools or institutions which have to be worked by deputed authority. Trust engenders trust—that is a mere truism. But trust does more than this: it arouses energy, creates interest, and above all, deepens responsibility—the recognition of which is especially needful for young women who are but little accustomed to power. The Head of an institution who will insist

upon doing everything herself, in her own way, may work admirably for the present moment; but she is undermining the very object for the success of which she is striving. A school, or a society, which rests solely upon the influence and authority of the Head is essentially weak in its foundation; and it can only be strengthened by widening its base, bringing others to take an interest in it and work for it; and this interest will never be awakened where there is no independent action. This is easy to say, not so easy to act upon, for it involves the necessity of sometimes sitting by patiently and silently, whilst our deputies are making mistakes, and even occasionally as it would seem injuring our work.

To be content with something short of perfection is a great gift. I call it a gift, because it is so rare, and there are so many who, with all their sincerity of purpose, never attain it, and indeed never seem to try to attain it. They are nothing if they are not critical.

But, on the other hand, delegated government needs supervision, because it is apt to be too strict. I remember, myself, when I was a child, being placed for a time, whilst I was at school, under the authority of a lady who took the place of the Head-governess. In herself this vice-Principal (for such I may call her) was the most tender-hearted, sympathetic, affectionate of human beings. She might have found it difficult to brush away a fly for being troublesome; but once placed in a position of responsibility, and invested with delegated authority, she was a perfect autocrat, no excuse could be admitted, no failure overlooked. In the schoolroom we dreaded and disliked her; out of the schoolroom we delighted in her. The cause of the difference was not far to seek. The Head-governess was stern and exacting, and the vice-Principal, though very kind by nature, was also very conscientious. It required greater intellect and moral courage than she possessed to take her own line and risk the consequences. She could not solve the difficult problem of two duties; and as she was placed in her position by an upper authority, for this authority she felt herself bound to work.

Yet there must be delegated authority continually. How can such over-strictness be avoided? Surely by the action of the superior power, by the care taken to leave the delegate within certain limits absolutely free, and by overlooking any small mistakes which may be made on the side of laxity. I say small advisedly, for great mistakes speak for themselves, and must, of course, be noticed. Encouragement, approbation, even the expression of gratitude, are all-important in the case of delegated authority. The difference of age and position which generally exists under such circumstances often gives rise to something like dictation on the one side, and timidity on the other. Persons who can be free and happy in their intercourse when they meet on an equality are likely to be awkward and restrained when the one is called upon to command, and the other to obey. A sharp word, a quick order, will rouse a spirit of opposition when

nothing like reproof is really intended. Gentleness is indeed a mighty power! We are told on the Highest authority that the meek shall inherit the earth. Outward submission and obedience to recognised power may be obtained by us without much difficulty; but as regards those who exercise delegated authority, we need also a conscientious regard to our wishes, if not actual affection for ourselves, since we are calling into existence a power which must in some degree act independently, and yet must be in accordance with our own aims and intentions. How difficult it is to delegate authority few would imagine without experience! In a large school the pupils can be easily managed; but the assistant governesses are often a chronic trouble. They must obey rules, yet they must be at liberty to make rules; they must be treated with respect, and yet they must be directed and at times admonished. These needs seem contradictory, and they are so in some degree, but it is possible to meet them. Definite principles and few rules have always appeared to me to constitute the secret of successful government in such cases, whether in Homes or Institutions; and to ensure these the persons who hold the superior authority must be content to put self in the background, to rule because it is their duty to rule, but to check themselves whenever they find that they are only indulging the wish to have their will obeyed.

Sympathy is another essential of good government, for the power of ruling well involves full comprehension of the nature and surroundings of those whom we govern. This fact is brought before us in the difficult problem of the government of Ireland. We English very earnestly desire to be just and kind to the Irish, to make them one with ourselves in every respect; and yet continually we find ourselves failing, because we do not understand the peculiarities inseparable from a difference of race. And a similar difficulty arises in other cases from a difference of age or of position. The old and the young, the present and the rising generation, have to learn sympathy, before good government and loyal obedience can be expected. There are many persons in the world who have a most clear perception of the shortcomings of their friends or dependents, and a very definite idea of the means by which their failures may be remedied, and yet are absolutely obtuse as regards the views and wishes of those whom they would fain improve; and this obtuseness is fatal to good government. No amount of high principle, no sincerity of purpose, will avail us if we are ignorant of the needs of the persons whom we desire to influence. The common proverb, 'Set a thief to catch a thief,' contains a whole volume of worldly wisdom. The thief understands the ways of the thief; the child comprehends the needs of the child; the servant knows what servants like. The teacher, in order to teach well, must know what it is to be ignorant. Forgetfulness of this principle works itself out in wrong results continually; there is no need to multiply instances.

What is needed is the practical lesson for oneself. In every case in which we are called upon to govern others we must—to be successful—make the effort to put aside our own tastes and prejudices, and live in imagination with the tastes and prejudices of those under us. This is a very difficult and a very self-denying task, and there are few who have sufficient earnestness of purpose to undertake it. The many probably see and feel that they are themselves right in principle and intention, and believing it their duty to compel their fellow-creatures to accept their views, they set to work to carry them out. The fact that their good efforts are failures only excites surprise, and is accepted as part of the mysterious discipline of life. That it is the result of a fault, or at least of an intellectual defect, never suggests itself.

The education of the young, especially, requires this sympathetic comprehension. If we cannot understand why the world is attractive, if we do not remember what it is to be merry and light-hearted, and careless, and interested in trifles, without regret for the past or fear for the future, we can never realise the temptations and difficulties of young life; and when we attempt to make laws for it our laws will be mistakes. When we begin to advise we shall speak to deaf ears; when we appeal to high principle we shall only strike upon stony hearts.

We need not always be able to say, 'I have felt as you feel,' for we may never have been in a similar position; but if we are to rule justly and wisely we must be able to say: 'I can understand, or imagine, what you feel.' Whether this power of throwing oneself as it were into the minds of others can be fully acquired where it does not originally exist, I am inclined to question; but undoubtedly it can be cultivated and improved.

The experiences of every-day life must tend to improve it, when there is anything like observation and good principle; and I suppose it is to this we may attribute the greater gentleness and readiness to make and accept excuses which are to be remarked in the old when compared with the young. Solomon's experienced advisers might have saved his kingdom from disruption; and there are few, I think, who would not say, 'If I am to be judged, let me be judged by the old. If I am to be ruled, let me be ruled by those who have had experience.'

Were there any doubt as to this absolute necessity for sympathy as the foundation of good government, the Christian has only to turn to the pages of the New Testament—the history of Man's Redemption—to be convinced that it is a need derived from the government of God. We have so learnt as Christians to associate sympathy with our idea of perfect religion, that we forget what it would be to be called upon to obey without it. The commands of our Blessed Lord are the commands of One who was Man as well as God, and as such we feel encouraged in our obedience by the certainty that He who gives

the order knows also the difficulty of carrying it out. We go to Him in confidence. We tell Him of our disinclination to obey. We own our shortcomings. He does not retract the order; but in the very act of confessing our weakness we are encouraged by the consciousness of His sympathy, and that consciousness engenders love, and love is in itself strength.

This is the result of the ordering of natural laws, the laws of our human nature. There is no doubt a more direct strength imparted in answer to our prayers; but that to which I am referring is to be obtained from human sympathy, as well as from Divine. God who made us knows how to touch our hearts, and when 'He bears our griefs and carries our sorrows,' even whilst laying upon us the burden of strict obedience to His Will, He says to all to whom He has committed authority upon earth, 'Go and do thou likewise.'

SHAKSPERE TALKS WITH UNCRITICAL PEOPLE.

XXIV.—HAMLET, PART II.

(*Supposed date* 1602–3; *published* 1603.)

THERE is a statement often made respecting *Hamlet* that it is a one-character play, which is not without foundation, if it means that the Prince is certainly predominant throughout, being kept mentally before us even when not on the stage, for every action of importance refers to him in some way or other. But if the remark means that the other characters of the play are insignificant in themselves, or so much sacrificed to Hamlet as to be ill-defined and shadowy, we must protest against such inaccuracy. Though all are subordinated to the central figure, each is clear and consistent within its own limits; for a real artist can convey his meaning by a few strokes, no less distinctly than by an elaborate picture. It is necessary to study attentively the characters of these people who surround Hamlet, if we would understand him; for their lives are so closely connected with his, and their natures and his so act and react on each other, that neither are intelligible apart. They are as necessary to him as the setting to the gem. What lights on his character and position we get from looking attentively at the people who fill the palace where we first find him! The common run of the courtiers call for little remark, one or two of Hamlet's chance sayings sufficiently characterise them as fawning on those in power, slighting those in disgrace, and accepting and tolerating any scandal rather than be out of favour; as eager to serve the usurper as they could have been for King Hamlet—true to their type in all times and places. But with two or three exceptions, to be mentioned later, they remain in a mass, not distinguished into individuals, yet when needful making a suitable background for the principal figures of the story. Of course, Claudius is now the centre round which they all revolve. He has successfully carried out his usurpation, therefore they are quite ready to accept him, and to leave any question as to the propriety of his marriage and the details of King Hamlet's death, to people of exaggerated scruples.

It is plainly told us by Hamlet that, up to the time of the King's death, Claudius was considered an entirely contemptible personage, not worth treating with even outward respect. His external deficiencies, described by the same authority, concealed the amount of energy and talent which made him dangerous when his opportunity came. He has the craft to plan, and the determination to carry out

his schemes without relenting or pause, a certain acuteness in judging the characters of those about him, so that he readily chooses his instruments; and also he has personal courage of a sort. When Laertes, wild with rage, breathing death and vengeance, and with the Danish mob behind him, comes bursting into the palace, Claudius faces him with a coolness which would have done credit to a better man. But there is a coarse brutality through his whole being which makes the cold-blooded murder of his brother perfectly credible; his very pleasures are coarse, swaggering, and ostentatious; while over the surface there is a sort of veneer of smooth profession and hypocrisy which renders his character absolutely revolting. It is sickening to hear this murderer, double-dyed in villainy, rolling out sentiments of morality and religious resignation, and being extra sanctimonious when he is plotting some fresh enormity. But all the same, Shakspere does not make Claudius a fiend outside of human nature. In spite of his villainies, in spite even of his intense hypocrisy, there is still enough life left in his soul for him occasionally to shudder at himself, and what he has done. Casual words find out tender places in the conscience which we should have thought as hard as the nether millstone, and he is capable of sudden paroxysms of remorse when his guilt feels an intolerable burden from which he would fain be free. But with a curious sense of truth in the midst of his falsehood, he cannot deceive himself as to the illusory nature of his repentance, while he still clings to the results of his crimes. Such a fit of remorse is produced by the play which Hamlet arranges to test him; but it only leads to despair, and the King comes out of his emotion harder and more determined than ever, for he is fresh from it when he despatches Hamlet to certain death—as he believes; nor does any relenting check him afterwards when he incites Laertes to assassinate the unsuspecting Prince, and prepares to assist him in doing the deed. To carry out this final crime, he spares no trouble, and exhausts himself in blandishments and flattery. We may notice that, though he talks of Hamlet's madness to other people, especially to the Queen, he never believes in it himself, after overhearing the interview with Ophelia. Claudius would not be half so much afraid of Hamlet, if he could think him really out of his mind; but feeling too surely the dangers which threaten him, he knows he cannot rest till either the English axe or Laertes' sword shall deliver him from his deadly fear.

Turning from Claudius to the Queen, we are met by one of those natures which perplex, not from depth but shallowness, people who seem hypocritical, but are more truly changeable, and therefore utterly puzzling to steadier minds. This fickle temperament is not incompatible with a good deal of charm, and we could easily imagine Gertrude to be, like the Queen in the 'Historie,' 'as courteous a Princess as any living, who had never offended any of her subjects'; that is, a pretty, good-tempered woman, with graceful manners,

softly easy-going, desiring above everything to have all comfortable around her. No doubt she made King Hamlet an affectionately admiring wife, enjoying his passionate devotion without troubling herself to understand it; and no doubt she felt very flat and miserable without it when he was dead; but found the cajoleries of Claudius a very good substitute, and accepted them without more ado. In the same easy fashion she is, doubtless, attached to her son, sorry if anything ails his health, and wishing to see him happily married; but she has no hesitation in keeping him out of his rights, nor in doing him the deepest injuries. Talking to such a woman of honour or conscience is to waste breath; she simply fails to understand it. She follows her own inclinations, and sincerely wonders how anybody can be found to object. Naturally her perception of anything not absolutely on the surface is very slow; for instance, the state of tortured feeling in which Hamlet lives after his father's death and her re-marriage, is a perfect mystery to her. Not that she is exactly callous, for with a great effort it is possible to make a temporary impression on her, and disturb her complacency; but it does not last long, the impression is effaced, and she is just as before. In fact, Gertrude is just the character to drive a sensitive and passionate nature to despair in any struggle with her, simply by her shallowness; every force brought against her would spend itself in vain before it could really change her.

The next most prominent person in the Court—most important in his own estimation, if not in that of the rest of the world—is, of course, Polonius. There are some puzzling points about this worthy which make us doubtful how he should be regarded. Mostly we are inclined to adopt one of Hamlet's uncivil phrases, and describe him as a 'tedious old fool'; but then we recall sayings of his of unquestionable wisdom, and hardly know how to reconcile the two ideas. Then it is clear that he has a considerable reputation for sagacity, and is still consulted by Claudius on matters of importance, though his prosing worries the Queen nearly out of patience. Some people look at him as representing a man who has had considerable mental power in his day, but who has outlived the best part of his brains, and has little now left but suspicious cunning and unbounded conceit. According to this view, his wise maxims addressed to Laertes are produced by a laborious effort of memory, recalling what had commended itself to his better days, and his reputation is not for what he is, but what he was; Claudius finding it convenient to have him about him as a well-known man, whose name helps to make the new king acceptable to the nation. There is a good deal to be said for this view; but it is difficult to reconcile the idea of senility with Polonius' measure of life and activity. Perhaps it is more accurate to consider him as a man always of a limited intellect, sharp in his way, but devoid of the least originality or imagination. He can adopt the wisdom of others without seeing the true depth of it, only

valuing it as prudent counsel which it is well to remember and act on, if possible. This kind of mind only narrows with increasing years, and Polonius' long experience seems to have intensified his suspiciousness and weakened his discretion. Hamlet intimates that he cannot even keep a secret; but where Polonius is concerned Hamlet is not an unprejudiced witness. There is no reason to doubt that the old man was a knowing sort of politician, and a useful courtier in his day, and has a fair amount of sagacity still for ordinary matters; but it is his misfortune that he has to end his days among extraordinary matters, where his sagacity is baffled, and his suspicions always turn in the wrong direction. His standard being very low and commonplace, some of his great mistakes arise from his judging everybody by it. He is eminently a time-server, and it never occurs to him to question the steps by which Claudius gained the crown, or to see anything peculiar in his marrying Gertrude. All his doubts and suspicions are kept for Hamlet's honour, for Ophelia's discretion, for Laertes' conduct in general; perhaps in this latter case there is some show of justification. There is often a sort of colour for what Polonius does. Abstractly considered, we might say that a careful father would reasonably object to having the heir to the crown continually hanging about his pretty daughter; but Polonius has to do with an exceptional prince in Hamlet, and this he never discovers. How much nearer to the mark is Ophelia's frank confidence in her strange and puzzling lover, than Polonius' coarse-minded suspicion! She cannot explain why she trusts Hamlet; but she is right, and her cunning old father wrong, as Polonius comes to admit in the end.

He does love his children after his fashion; but he is not over gentle with his daughter, and has no confidence in her power of taking care of herself, just as he does not stick at sending a spy to find out what Laertes is about in Paris, and whether he is not disgracing himself somehow. Nevertheless, there is strong family affection and pride between the three. However knowing Polonius may be on some points, he is a most undeniable old bore when he sets to work to explain anything, and, like most bores, he cannot bear being interrupted. Partly, perhaps, from failing powers, but also because nothing with him is original; if a single link breaks in his talk, it is very hard for him to pick it up and go on. But Polonius' most marked characteristic of all, is his unbounded self-confidence. He is so used to be consulted and deferred to, that he really thinks his narrow judgment quite infallible, and even when he has been proved to be wrong, he is as confident as ever on the next occasion. Perhaps this is the special point about him which infuriates Hamlet, and inspires his earnest desire to snub Polonius when any opportunity offers; but the worthy man's conceit is quite impenetrable. It is this same conceit which makes him attempt to manage the unhappy Prince, and be sure that he knows his malady and its cure. Again,

from the same cause, he comes to intrude himself between mother and son, and so brings on the catastrophe by which he dies.

Next to Hamlet himself, no character in the play has been more debated than Ophelia, and people find it possible to take very different views of her. As usual with most of these hotly contested creations, a good deal has been read in, and her words and deeds strained to bear construction, both for good and evil, which could hardly have been originally intended. We may freely admit that there are puzzling circumstances in her story, and some things which we could wish explained. Perhaps this arises from the fact that Shakspere seems to have united in her two distinct conceptions of character, one simply Hamlet's innocent girl-love, the other suggested by the 'Historie.' Here a woman is employed by the King to lead Hamlet into a trap, but uses the interview contrived for her to warn him to keep up the appearance of madness to save his life, being attached to him after a fashion. She then disappears from the story, and Hamlet transfers his affections to the English princess, whom he afterwards marries, and treats very badly, and whose trusting love and general sweetness may possibly have foreshadowed Ophelia. But the two ideas of the innocent 'Rose of May,' and the coarse if faithful intriguer, do not blend well; and whenever Ophelia seems to resemble the heroine of this episode in the 'Historie,' she becomes difficult to understand. That is, unless we adopt the off-hand method which satisfies some people, of setting her down as a shallow little fool, just doing as she is told! But we cannot believe that Shakspere meant us to consider her anything of the sort.

Her surroundings and position are easily imagined. We can fancy her passing a safe and sheltered girlhood with a father and brother, who both love and admire her, though displaying their affection in the queer, half-disparaging fashion, which is still sometimes favoured by the masculine mind. To some fathers, husbands, and brothers, their womenfolk are everything that is charming, but perfectly incompetent to take care of themselves on any occasion of importance. The womenfolk in question generally tolerate this curious way of regarding them, pretty well, just as Ophelia is by no means disturbed by the doubts thrown on her discretion, and if it had not frequently the effect of making them as incompetent as they are expected to be, there would be no great harm in it. But Ophelia is evidently one of those girls whom everybody would like to pet and take care of, from the Queen downwards, a gentle winning creature, delicately fair, like the May roses to which Laertes likens her—not a splendid glowing summer queen. We naturally connect Ophelia with flowers as much as Perdita, fair tender images associate themselves with her instinctively. We are told nothing as to how or when the wonderful thought of Hamlet's love for her dawned on her; but she clearly

received it without hesitation or misgiving. While other people are criticising Hamlet, or puzzling over him, Ophelia simply loves and trusts him as a child might do. The barriers of rank or position never trouble her—how should they?—while Hamlet's 'music-vows' are being poured into her ear. She knows his heart far better than all the wise people, though she has no pretensions to be wise at all, except with that 'brain of the heart' which would guide her right enough in all her dealings with her lover, if she might follow it. Hamlet did not want a clever woman; he wanted something fresh and pure to revive his sorely bruised heart and spirit, and this Ophelia gave him freely. It would appear that she has a good deal of liberty, and that Hamlet has no difficulty in gaining access to her till Laertes and Polonius suddenly advise themselves to meddle in the matter. It is noticeable that while Ophelia listens with all proper gravity to all her brother has to say about Hamlet's suit and the dangers connected with it, she never pretends to the least conviction that he is right. She promises to think of it and be careful; but her faith in Hamlet is clearly not shaken. There is a delightful little touch of sisterly malice in her gently turning back Laertes' warnings on himself, as if she guesses that he needs them more than she does. When it comes to Polonius' positive orders, Ophelia has no choice but to comply; but while promising obedience, she clings to her faith in her lover, and never admits that there is any truth in Polonius' notions about him. We do not know whether she sees anything of Hamlet between this scene and his startling appearance in her room; but she doubtless knows the court rumour that his mind is unsettled. And when he comes to her thus mysteriously, the terrible idea instantly occurs to her that her seeming unkindness has completed his alienation. Not that she is as sure about it, Polonius may be quite positive on these matters; but Ophelia is only doubtful, alarmed, and anxious. Then comes the point over which there is most controversy, her interview with Hamlet while the King and Polonius listen concealed; and here is the puzzle, that we are not quite sure what Shakspere means us to understand as to her knowledge of the whole plan. Going by the stage directions, we should think she heard Polonius detail the scheme; but he meets her, when Hamlet has dashed away, with, 'You need not tell us what Lord Hamlet said; we heard it all,' as if she had supposed herself alone with her lover. This reduces the part she takes to simply having an interview with Hamlet, and giving the results of it to those whom she believes to be his friends, with a view to curing his mental disorder. Certainly her demeanour during that heartbreaking scene is not that of a girl conscious of concealed witnesses; and on this supposition, she may be speaking her impression when she says that Polonius is 'at home.' But on the assumption that she does know of the presence of the auditors when the interview begins (we are positive she forgets them after the first

few minutes), does she quite deserve all the hard words, 'treacherous,' 'weak,' 'false,' which have been hurled at her for helping in the scheme? *We* are repelled by the plot, which, if successful, would have laid bare Hamlet's inmost thoughts to his enemies, and does deprive him of that screen of madness which partly protects him from Claudius; but we must remember that to Ophelia these enemies take the guise of Hamlet's best friends, only anxious to find out what is the matter with him. The only idea which has been presented to her is that of love-madness, partly caused by her apparent caprice, and possibly to be removed by her means, but wherein the most important point is to see how far it has disturbed Hamlet's mind, and what is his actual state. If, to test this, Ophelia takes part in an experiment proposed by her father, of whose wisdom she naturally thinks highly, and eagerly sanctioned by the Queen, whose love for Hamlet she cannot doubt, why should we blame her? That anybody could have another reason for making the experiment than a desire to get Hamlet well as soon as possible, would never cross her mind.

The odd part of her action is the tone she takes in addressing Hamlet, as if he had changed and become cold to her since the time when he gave her the 'remembrances,' whereas the estrangement has certainly been on her side, under Polonius' direction. Either there is something unexplained, or Ophelia is trying a little stratagem, expecting it to produce a renewal of Hamlet's former passionate protestations of tender affection. What it does produce overwhelms the poor child with horror. While she takes Hamlet's words as really expressing his thoughts, she is bewildered with misery for herself, and when she accepts the other alternative and thinks him raving in madness, her heart breaks for him, and she can only cry to heaven to help him. What does it matter what she says or where her father is, when things are at this pass? And when Hamlet himself ends the torture and rushes away from her, what a loving outburst come from her wrung heart, showing how truly she loves, how fondly she idealises him, who is now divided from her by a worse barrier than death! The whirling storm of Hamlet's fortunes sorely bruises this tender creature, meant for shelter and peace, desiring to hurt no one, yet strangely destined to suffer most through those most dear to her, and who loved her best. Indirectly, of course, the wickedness of Claudius and Gertrude causes Ophelia's misery; but the blows which break her heart are actually dealt by her father and brother and lover. With all Ophelia's soft gentleness, she has more self-control than one might expect. She forces herself through the ordeal of meeting Hamlet again, and of listening to his wild talk and bitter words, as if no sweet love-dreams had ever arisen between them. As far as she dares, she tries now and then to soothe him with brief tremulous little words; perhaps the progress of the play gives her some enlightenment as to the causes of his excitement, as

she can hardly fail to note the intense watch which he keeps on the King. At all events, in the climax of that thrilling scene, Hamlet and Ophelia part to meet no more in life.

It is often assumed that Claudius is right in asserting that simple grief for her father's death causes Ophelia's madness; but it would seem more reasonable to ascribe it to the combination of misfortunes which fall upon her. First comes her misery about Hamlet, then the shock of Polonius' sudden death, which is also shrouded in mystery as far as Ophelia is concerned, and if a guess at the truth reaches her in any way it could but double her grief and horror, remembering that Polonius had intended once more to play the spy on Hamlet, as is explained in her hearing, Then comes her lonely position with Laertes still away, no one to help or comfort her; all this combines to unsettle her mind. Through all her wanderings of thought runs the triple idea of love, desertion, death; but the controlling power is all gone, the foolish rhymes she may have heard in the nursery or in the street, and probably could not have recalled in days of sanity, come idly from her lips, mingled with sayings, strangely significant to others, if not to herself. Still the sweet and graceful nature remains, so that her broken utterances have a force of pathos about them beyond eloquence. While all knowledge of human friends has drifted away from Ophelia, and her brother's face is as that of a stranger, she still knows her flower friends, and her fevered brain finds solace, even meaning in their silent company. As often mercifully happens in such cases, all memory of the sad past has disappeared, leaving only a dim impression of some sorrow, and now and then a remembrance of her father's death. A great deal of meaning has been discovered in Ophelia's distribution of her flowers; but as we can only guess who are the recipients in each case, it seems more likely that the scene rather illustrates the gentle and poetical turn of her mind, even when all confused and shattered, than anything more abstruse. She glides away from our sight, softly whispering, with her own tender pathos, '"God have mercy on his soul," and on all Christain souls, I pray God,' and so passes to the slanting willow and the glassy brook, and her death among the flowers, happy in escaping the sore trouble which life has brought her, and which the future could but increase. It is strange to think of Ophelia lying 'cold, smiling and blest,' while Hamlet and Laertes pour out their fierce stormy love over her in vain.

This Laertes is a strange character, made up of curious contrasts, fine qualities, mingled with positively base ones. Externally, he is brilliant, accomplished, and gallant, fitted to make his way in any society, and possessing the advantage of a great fund of energy, which carries him over all obstacles when it is once roused. Perhaps this sense of power in Laertes has something to do with Hamlet's admiration for him, the contrast between the two characters is all the more strongly marked when they come to be in somewhat

parallel circumstances, each having a father to avenge. Obviously the one is strong where the other is weak, and dashes at his point where the other hesitates; no ill-timed scruples ever hold Laertes back when he sets a thing before him, and the fire and vigour of his proceedings might inspire Hamlet with something like envy. But, on the other hand, he is a narrow man in spite of his education and accomplishments and travel, narrow-minded in his judgments of other people, narrow in his sympathies, even in his affections. Like his father, he misjudges both Hamlet and Ophelia, and moralises and proses on the subject of their affection for each other, till we long to shake him, his air of superior wisdom is so exasperating. He is all the more provoking because what he says is true enough as a generalisation, but quite false as applied to the particular pair in question. Various speeches of the Queen's show perfectly clearly that if things had gone right with Hamlet, there was nothing to prevent his marrying Ophelia if he chose to do so, and therefore all this talk on Laertes' part simply amounts to this, that he has no belief in Hamlet's love and constancy. A still more irritating turn is given to the conversation when Laertes takes to lecturing Ophelia on propriety, and only 'unmasking her beauty to the moon,' and so on. Now we feel convinced that he expected and desired something very different when *he* went courting, as Shakspere doubtless knew that a young gentleman like Laertes was certain to have a different standard for his own sister, and the sister of any one else! Still we could get over the priggishness of Laertes' care for his sister, in consideration of his love for her, we could get over the passionate selfishness which would convulse a whole kingdom for the sake of a private revenge, remembering the determination and courage which it manifests; but we cannot forgive Laertes for buying that poison. Under no conceivable circumstances had an honourable gentleman of Denmark any business with a bravo's tools, and the fact of the purchase shows that he was ready to become an assassin on sufficient provocation. We cannot deny Laertes the credit of strong family affection. This brings him tearing home on the news of his father's death, wildly determined to be revenged somehow, not waiting for detailed proof, but jumping to the conclusion that Polonius was murdered and that Claudius is accountable for it. His unfeigned grief over Ophelia's madness and death testify to his real love for her, though we must think he would have been better occupied taking care of her in her helpless state, than in plotting a cowardly vengeance with the King. We can hardly think him to blame that Claudius so easily turns his wrath against Hamlet, for a little twisting of the facts would make Polonius' death seem a wilful murder, and Laertes never seems to reflect that Claudius has perhaps his private reasons for wanting to be rid of his nephew and the heir to the crown. The unhesitating willingness with which he flings himself into the King's assassination scheme is what revolts us in

Laertes, even counting on Hamlet's generous freedom from suspicion as an aid in his destruction. In our notions the thing is impossible to a man with the least sense of honour; but an audience of Shakspere's day had heard of too many examples in their own time of men always accounted honourable lending themselves to assassination plots, not to recognise the possibility of Laertes' action. Had not Queen Elizabeth's palace swarmed with assassins who ate her bread while seeking her life, and yet carried themselves as honourable men to the world at large?

Ophelia's death and incomplete funeral increase Laertes' fury against the supposed author of her woes, and his determination to be revenged is only intensified when Hamlet appears at the graveside, frantic with love and passion. The sort of reconciliation which precedes the fencing-match is accepted by Laertes awkwardly enough, for he has the grace not to feel quite comfortable under it, not being an accomplished hypocrite like the King. Moreover, when the moment arrives for executing the villainous scheme, some compunctions do seize him, but they are not strong enough to turn him from his purpose. It is only when the fatal point has touched him, and he knows that his life is forfeited, that a veil seems to fall from his eyes, and he sees his offence against Hamlet, and Hamlet's against him in their true proportions, and realises that Claudius has made a tool of him in the matter. Then he does all he can to atone by full confession in the few moments left to him, and dies, leaving us half reconciled to him, after all.

From Laertes' fierce struggle to attain his own ends at whatever cost to other people, we turn with some sense of relief to Horatio's calm and steady devotion to his one friend. His is the kind of character which Shakspere repeatedly sets in the background of his plays—a figure neither sparkling nor showy, but so quietly steadfast and true that the other characters come to repose their stormy excitability on his strength. He is the sort of man who is generally not quite appreciated till something removes him from his accustomed sphere, and then everybody is astonished to find what a gap he makes.

We are told very little about Horatio except the facts of his poverty, his having experienced ups and downs in life, and his studentship at Wittenberg, where Hamlet was wise enough to find out his worth, and able to inspire him with that unswerving devotion to his princely comrade, which becomes the moving spring of his life, as far as we see it. Without ever making protestations of his affection, Horatio simply devotes himself to serving and helping Hamlet as far as his power extends, and feels his doing so such an obvious and natural thing that he is quite startled when he discovers the strength of the Prince's regard for him. It comes as natural to him to feel the world unbearable if Hamlet leaves it, and this calm self-controlled man longs to fling his life away when the object of it is gone, so that he only consents to live in order to be the dead Hamlet's

champion, and defend his memory. There is no servility in his devotion; he is perfectly at his ease with Hamlet, not afraid of disagreeing with him, nor in extreme cases trying to control him, as when Hamlet will follow the Ghost; but none of this affects their friendship.

It is interesting to notice the slight touches which mark the difference between Horatio and the other two Wittenberg students, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. For instance, Hamlet puts the same question casually after each arrival, as to what has brought them to Elsinore? The wily couple glibly assure him that they have only come to see him—not true, by the way. Horatio, not wishing to recall sad memories, and not good at excuses, utters the transparent fiction—'A truant disposition, good, my lord,' and when Hamlet won't hear of that, falls back on the truth, that he came to the King's funeral. So throughout, even when Rosencrantz and Guildenstern speak the truth, their words ring false, Horatio is sincere and straightforward all through. Nobody could make a tool of him; so to the end he remains Hamlet's one friend and helper, the sympathising recipient of his confidence, the faithful guardian of his secrets; finally, the executor of his last wishes and defender of his memory. It is entirely in keeping with the rest of Horatio's doings that he is the only person who appears as trying to do anything for poor Ophelia in her distraction. While other people shrink from her, Horatio manages to humour her fancy for seeing the Queen, and evidently pities her from his heart.

When considering the fate of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, it looks, on the face of it, as if they get rather hard measure from Hamlet's indignation, because it is never exactly stated that they know the contents of their commission; but assuming with Hamlet that they not only know it, but willingly accept the office of conducting him to death, such cold-blooded treachery deserves the worst it could get. There is a special feature in their falsity, in that they use the old comradeship between them and Hamlet to betray him; they keep up the appearance of affection and respect while they have given themselves over to the new king. Though at first they only begin by trying to find out what ails him, they have secretly deserted Hamlet, and rapidly progress from watching and spying on him to executing Claudius' pleasure respecting him, and at last becoming his gaolers, and leading him to a violent death. From the very first, we can judge by the extent of their fawning on that wretched Claudius, that they are not inclined to stick at anything which promotes their own advantage; in Hamlet's scornful phrase, they are regular 'sponges' for profit, useful, unscrupulous instruments in the hands of a usurper.

While nearly all the characters of the play are pretty intimately connected together by the links which bind their fortunes to Hamlet's, Shakspere does not let us forget that the big outside world is going

on all the time, regardless of them and their sins and sufferings. Rumours of Fortinbras and his activity come in from time to time across the interior excitements of Elsinore. Some people will have it that this princely adventurer, always doing something, is intended to contrast with Hamlet, ever delaying his action; but surely, if Shakspere had intended to emphasise this, he would not have waited till the last instant of the play to bring Fortinbras on the stage, nor do we see that his story, as far as we know it, bears out the idea. He first begins a wild enterprise against Denmark, but abandons it at his uncle's orders; undertakes another, not much wiser, against Poland, and comes back to find the Danish throne, as it were, waiting for him. But what analogy has all this with Hamlet's history? Nevertheless, it brings a breath of the fresher, outer air into the prison-house atmosphere of Elsinore.

Then we are reminded of the ordinary world, with its hard and shallow judgments, its cold insensibility to the sufferings it cannot comprehend, by the Grave-diggers.

How their scene has been abused as spoiling the whole tragedy, inappropriate, and everything else! The lovers of the 'unities,' of course, fell on it tooth and nail, and plenty of critics still re-echo their shrieks. Still, we may be bold to say that Shakspere knew what he was about when he put it in, and was by no means only humouring the 'groundlings.' The strain and tension of Hamlet is so great that we need a momentary break and relief. But even so, the sadness is not far off, underlying the Grave-diggers' quaint speeches, as well as Hamlet's dreamy musing—is almost the saddest of thoughts: 'Be what you may, fair, gifted, loving, unhappy, your sorrow, your tragedy is nothing to the rest of the world, which goes on toiling, jeering, and laughing, as if you had never been.' Everything human, however heroic, must have a commonplace aspect, on which the ordinary world inevitably seizes, and Shakspere does not shrink from showing us that Hamlet and Ophelia's stories seemed to the vulgar mind as a mere case of a madman sent off out of harm's way, an ordinary suicide hidden by the privileges of rank.

Lastly, while loving hearts break and high natures struggle to the death, the world of frivolity and fashion, typified by Osric, goes on its indifferent way. Surely our modern esthetic ladies and gentlemen, and all the devotees of china and inventors of incomprehensible jargons, ought to adopt Osric as a kind of patron saint, a model which they are not likely to surpass. Though our knowledge of Osric is principally derived from one passage (for during the fencing match he has to keep tolerably quiet) we know him quite as well as if he appeared constantly. He is the embodiment, the concentrated expression of that affectation, foppery, and conceit at which Shakspere has dealt blows all through the plays whenever he had a chance to do so, and as Osric has really nothing to do with the story in this case, it seems as if Shakspere, for once, indulged himself in setting up a

ninepin, and, through Hamlet's agency, knocking it down again. Certainly poor Osric is knocked very flat, for Hamlet outdoes him in his own jargon, and forces him to fall back on plain English. While all the tragedy of the play has gone on, Osric has doubtless been airing his fine clothes and composing his elegant phrases, perfectly unconscious of anything more important than settling a bet or following the latest fashion. But perhaps Hamlet is a trifle hard on the foolish creature, who is not meant to be taken too seriously, and who has an excuse not always shared by his modern imitators—he is very young, and may get wiser in time.

Though these outside people are thus brought into the story, reminding us of the indifferent world, their very carelessness of Hamlet and his troubles helps to indicate how closely all the rest are bound to him, and how inseparable they are from him. In harmony with his dark fortunes, a shadow rests on the play from beginning to end, even the rough soldier walking his rounds on the fortress walls, is not only nipped by the biting cold, but sick at heart as well; and we may observe that there are none of those outbreaks of enjoyment of natural beauty which occur so frequently in the earlier plays, for instance, in *Romeo and Juliet*, relieving the sadness of the tragedy with a tender delight. But here, either the subject was too profoundly sorrowful to admit of such relief, or the poet was too sad to seek for it. The only indications of scenery which are given suggest the windswept platform before the castle, the bleak cliff towering over a wintry sea, and the barren heaths of Denmark. It may be accidental, but it is certainly curious that the only references to scenes of a softer character are inseparably connected with violence and death, the retired orchard where King Hamlet is murdered, the lonely willow where Ophelia meets her death, and the churchyard where her mutilated funeral is performed. As for the interior of Hamlet's home, no possible material brilliancy could disperse the mental gloom which hangs over it.

Yet we come back to the point from which we started. With all the sadness, all the mysteries, all the deep unanswered questions which abound in it, *Hamlet* remains one of the best known, if not best loved, of all the plays. Perhaps the very fact of the mystery hanging about it adds to the fascination which it and its sad-hearted, enigmatical hero have possessed and still possess for the generations which keep on coming and going, as they have done ever since the arch enchanter formed the magic circle in which Hamlet stands immortal.

CONSTANCE O'BRIEN.

HOPPING IN EAST KENT.

The Hoppers.

Kent being the great English hopping centre, the season no sooner sets in, than the county is inundated with hoppers from all parts. This is more especially the case in mid-Kent; gangs of roughs from the very lowest slums of London, and other large towns, arriving in whole train-loads, and pouring into the rural districts, where during their stay they often give much trouble by their unruly and riotous behaviour.

These rowdies, however, do not come much beyond Canterbury, so that we in East Kent are comparatively free from them. Indeed, the whole of the hopping in this part is done by *local* pickers, or by those gathered from the surrounding towns and villages, whence whole families are often engaged, who, having locked up their homes, take with them their goods and chattels, and proceed to the scene of their labours, mostly in carts or waggons sent for them by the growers. They are lodged, some in barns and in low wooden buildings erected for the purpose, whilst others (the more respectable portion) take up their quarters in adjacent villages; all hoppers, however, are obliged to find their own food.

As I write (Sept., 1886), hopping is in 'full swing' all round about, and the air is literally laden with the scent of the hops, and both pickers and growers are in the best of spirits, for this season in East Kent is an unusually good one, in fact, the best there has been for many years. As an instance of this, I may state that a farmer living near Canterbury has just realised £6 a cwt. for his hops, the yield of which was considerably over a ton per acre.

The Bin-man.

The hops are cut down and taken to the pickers by an individual, known as the 'bin-man.' This is done in two ways: the older method being to cut the bine near the foot, and to remove it, hop-poles and all, to where the pickers are at work. The other and newer way, is for the 'bin-man' to cut the bine, and then, by means of an instrument made for the purpose, strip it from its poles, leaving them standing in their original position, whilst the bine alone is taken to the pickers. This plan seems to have its advantages, for by its adoption the bin-man's labour is considerably lightened, whilst the pickers find the bine much more easy to manipulate when disencumbered of its heavy poles.

Picking the Hops.

The hops here are not picked into *boxes* as in America, but into circular baskets, each of which contain five bushels. When one of these is full, the tally-man is called, and he and the bin-man together empty the hops into a large sack, holding generally about two baskets. As these sacks are filled, they are loaded up on a waggon, and carted away about three times a day to the *oast-house*, where the hops are dried.

The hop-pickers are not paid by the day, but by the quantity picked, and the pay, per basket, varies according to the season. If it be a good one like the present, and the hops are large, and fill up quickly, the price given is usually about one shilling a basket; but if it be a bad year, and the hops consequently small and shrivelled, they lie so closely in the baskets, that they take a very much longer time in filling, and the pay is then often as much as three or four shillings.

The Tally-man.

He is rather an important personage in his way, and derives his name from carrying a number of pieces of flat wood called tallies, about a foot long and an inch wide. Each tally is numbered, and has a duplicate piece of wood numbered the same, and corresponding in every way to its fellow, so that when one is fitted over the other the two appear as one piece. As soon as the farmer has engaged his pickers, the tally-man goes his rounds, and presents to each one of these tallies, retaining its duplicate, which is slung on a cord round his neck. The object of the tallies is to enable the hopper to know the exact number of baskets he has picked during the season, which lasts from four to six weeks. For every basket picked, a notch is filed on the tally and its duplicate, and this is done by the tally-man placing one exactly over the other, and filing the notch across the two edges simultaneously; thus any attempt at cheating is prevented, and everything rendered fair and square. About half an hour before the hoppers' dinner, the tally-man shouts at the top of his voice the order to 'load light.' This signifies to the bin-man that no more hops are to be pulled than can be disposed of within the ensuing half-hour, as if they were left cut they soon fade, which deteriorates from their value. The same order is given half an hour before 'clearing-up' time, which takes place whenever the oast-house is fully charged.

The Oast-house.

These curiously shaped buildings, with their circular walls and tall extinguisher-like roofs, form a striking feature in the Kentish landscape.

Every grower of any pretensions possesses one or more of these, in

which the freshly-picked hops are dried before being pressed. The lower part or ground-floor is occupied almost entirely by a large fire or furnace, which is kept burning night and day. Over the circular brickwork which surrounds the fire, is placed sheet iron, and above that again is stretched a large and strong cloth. The heated iron diffuses an equal degree of warmth over the whole surface of the cloth on which the hops are spread to be dried, the steam rising from them, and the smoke from the furnace, being both carried off through a curiously shaped cowl, which is turned by the wind, and is mounted on the topmost point of the roof.

Drying one batch of hops generally takes about twelve hours, at the expiration of which time they are taken from the cloth and spread upon the floor of the cooling-room, which is situated in the upper part of a building communicating with the oast-house. In the centre of the floor of this room is a round hole, made just large enough to contain the open mouth of a pocket (as the large sack into which the hops are pressed is called). When the dried hops are sufficiently cooled, one of these pockets is suspended in the hole, its mouth being just level with the floor, and a certain quantity of hops is then swept into it. Next the hop-press, which stands exactly over the hole, is screwed down into the pocket, until the hops are as tight as caked tobacco, when the press is raised, and the process is repeated again and again till the pocket is literally *crammed* full. The mouth is then sewn up and the hops are ready to be sampled, which is done by a man employed for the purpose, and who is paid twopence for every sample made. This is done by cutting a small slit in the hop pocket, and extracting from thence a wedge of compressed hops, which is made into a parcel and labelled, and is sent with many others to London, in order that the buyers may be able to judge of the quality of the hops before purchasing any large quantities.

E. J. C. Baird.

THREE MONTHS IN COLORADO.

BY CAROLINE W. LATIMER.

'De ruts an' de stones
An' de joltin's to de bones,
Are as nuffin' to de glory an' de joy.'

WITH these lines from an old negro camp-meeting hymn running in my head, I descended from the train on which I had spent three days and nights, while coming a distance of two thousand miles, and found myself at Colorado Springs.

This little town, which has of late years become a place of resort for invalids, and especially consumptives, is situated on a high plateau six thousand feet above sea-level, and surrounded by the open prairie, except on one side, where the magnificent chain of the Rockies rises up, with Pike's Peak towering over all.

I myself knew almost nothing of the place or its inhabitants; my home had always been in Maryland, on the borders of the Southern States, and the West was, to my imagination, peopled almost exclusively with Indians and cow-boys. I supposed that I should find the place to which I was coming composed mainly of log-cabins and wigwams, and I had provided myself with every conceivable necessary and convenience, under the impression that I should not be able to procure so much as a paper of pins in the howling wilderness of my imagination. My ideas therefore received something of a shock as I drove through streets filled with shops of every description, and further on came to pretty villas with grounds laid out around them, and on descending from the carriage found myself in one of the most charming houses I ever saw, full of books, beautiful china, and ornaments, and every description of comfort and luxury.

I arrived in the midst of a driving rain, so that it was not until the afternoon of the next day that I could catch a glimpse of the Rockies, and when I did I was in some respects much disappointed. I believe that almost every one experiences this feeling when they first see them, for they have expected loveliness as well as grandeur, and as they rise up bald and rugged, with the timber-line distinctly marked, and the bright red colour of the earth painfully vivid, one feels greatly the want of something to soften and refine their harsh outlines. This defect is owing in a great measure to the extreme clearness and rarity of the air which makes them stand out sharply defined, and entirely without atmosphere. *C'est magnifique, mais ce n'est pas la beauté* is, if I may take the liberty of misquoting, what best

describes them to my mind. After a time, however, they began to grow on me, and when I saw the wonderful changes of colour which passed over them continually, and the marvellous effects of clouds and sunshine, I felt more and more affection for them, until now that I have left them far behind me, their solemn grandeur lives in my memory, as something which no future impressions can surpass.

The rain which had been my greeting to Colorado is a very unusual thing, and I did not see another rainy day during the three months I was there. In the autumn and winter there is not a drop of rain, and although there is occasional snow, it disappears almost as fast as it falls. The summer is called the rainy season; but even then the rain only falls in showers, and although these are sometimes very heavy, they pass over in an hour, and the instant the sun reappears everything is as brilliant and sparkling as before. Indeed, it frequently happens that the sun does not think it necessary to withdraw at all during a shower, and I once saw a violent hailstorm, with stones as large as marbles and accompanied by thunder and lightning, while the moon shone peacefully all the time. The temperature is very hot occasionally in the summer, and sometimes very cold in winter; but one does not suffer with either extreme, because the air is so dry and light.

It is the extreme dryness which makes the climate desirable for consumptives, although the altitude is so great that they often suffer very much for a time in becoming accustomed to it.

I knew of course that I must expect to find the place full of sick people, but my wildest anticipations fell far short of the reality. It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that every one I met was there for personal health or that of some member of the family, and it seemed to me that the whole world was divided into three classes: invalids, great invalids, and celebrated invalids. The last-named class I did not of course see very much of, as they were confined, as a rule, to their houses; but the entire town seemed to me composed of the other two. Shopkeepers, clerks, telegraph-boys, school-teachers, in short, all sorts and conditions of men, including the doctors themselves, all have a lung, or rather, none of them have two. This state of things is borne by the sufferers with philosophy and cheerfulness, and does not in the least interfere with a great deal of very pleasant society. Neither does it interfere with marrying and giving in marriage; indeed, I knew one instance in which a couple, who were both in a very precarious state of health, were actually married in haste, because the attending physician declared that the gentleman caught cold by going out in the evenings to see the lady.

I do not mean of course that all of these people are actually ill; indeed, a great many of them are apparently quite well, and have not even a cough, but their well-being is dependent on their remaining in Colorado, and it is only in a few instances that invalids can return to the East permanently. It is fortunate when they are wise enough

to realise this, and resign themselves to it, for one often hears of very sad cases when persons, who persist in trying to live at home, begin to decline rapidly. It would seem as if this state of things must of necessity be very depressing, but this is not the case. The climate is so exhilarating, and the physical enjoyment of the moment so keen, that the sick people and their friends seem always happy and bright.

The climate, however, has its defects as well as its advantages; it has a very bad effect on nervous disorders, and frequently causes complete sleeplessness, and in some forms of heart complaint, it is very injurious, and on this account one often meets families who are completely separated, as one member is forced to live in Colorado, and another cannot in some instances even spend a night there. Altogether, dearly as I love the little town, and greatly as I enjoy the life there, it seemed to me it must be a hard fate to be doomed to spend the remainder of a life, whether long or short, there and there only.

'*Lasciate ogni speranza voi ch' entrate*'

has been said to be its only fitting motto.

The name Colorado Springs is absurdly inappropriate. There are no springs at all in the town, though there are very fine ones at the little village of Manitou, which is six miles off.

This is a charming little spot nestled right at the foot of the mountains, and much in request during the summer by tourists, and residents from the town who like the change. The name Manitou (Great Spirit) is the one given it by the Indians, who were well aware of the beneficial effects of the springs, of which there are several different kinds, such as iron, soda, and sulphur. The Indians of course ascribed their healing powers to the direct influence of the Manitou, and when they brought their sick to be cured they hung offerings on the trees to propitiate him. For some time after the white men took possession of the place, there was a certain portion of ground reserved for the Indians, on which they could build their wigwams; but by degrees they have disappeared, and it is now some years since one of them has been seen.

There is a beautiful drive from Manitou, which originally was a trail made by the Ute Indians, and which is still called the Ute Pass; in one place there is a huge stone, which apparently was too large for them to move, and has been hollowed out by their feet.

Following up this road we come to Manitou Park, which is twenty-six miles from Colorado Springs. The parks are open spaces at a great elevation, where there is water and magnificent pine-trees, which are as large as oaks. These trees grow in such a manner that they seem to have been purposely arranged to form an ornamental park, and it is difficult to believe that it is Nature's own design. There are several of these parks within a short distance of the springs, and the principal ones are Estes and Manitou. There are hotels at these two, and many persons come up during the summer to enjoy the cool

weather which is always to be found there, even at Midsummer. Estes Park I did not see, but I spent two days at Manitou Park with great enjoyment. It is, however, an isolated spot, and I should think it might become very monotonous after a short time; there is very little of interest except the magnificent view, which is so extended that when one sits on the verandah of the hotel it is almost like being at sea. There are no drives, and no horses to drive even if there were, so that, except for gentlemen who fish at a very fine trout ranch, there is literally nothing to do. The hotel is built of logs, and is surrounded by a little settlement of log cabins and tents, belonging to people who prefer to sleep in them, and get their meals at the hotel. These houses, built of logs with the bark on, are exceedingly picturesque, and one of them which was some little distance from the hotel, and belonged to a private family, was I think the prettiest country house I ever saw.

It was shortly before my visit to Manitou Park that I went to see the Grand Cañon of the Arkansas River, which is some distance from Colorado Springs, so that it took us a long day on the railroad to go and come. The Royal Gorge, which is the finest part of the cañon, is a narrow cleft between two enormous walls of rock, which rise up perpendicularly for more than two thousand feet, and between them, roaring and foaming, is the Arkansas River. There is a little rocky path by the side of the water which gives just width enough for the narrow gauge railway, except in one place where the river fills up the entire space; and the only way in which a bridge could be built was by driving iron bars into the rock on either side, and suspending the bridge from them. This was to me the most wonderful thing which I saw, for one sees there not only the wonders of Nature, but the triumph of Science. It is the custom in the West, when the train is going through any remarkably fine scenery, to put on what are called 'observation cars'—that is, cars without any top or sides—so that the view may be unobstructed. Owing to some mistake, however, there were none on this train; and so, in order that I might lose nothing, I went out and sat on the steps on the rear of the car while we were passing through the gorge. It frightened me very much at first, but after I became accustomed to the sensation, I enjoyed it very much, though in some places we were so near to the wall of rock that I felt as if I must graze my fingers, which were holding on to the railing of the steps.

On our way back from this excursion the train stopped for an hour at Cañon City to allow the passengers to see the Penitentiary belonging to the State of Colorado; and as we passed through the great iron gates the officials gave us little tickets, which were to be presented when we came out, which to our great amusement we found to have printed on them, 'Expiration of Sentence, June 23rd,' that being the date of our visit. I had never seen a penitentiary before, and I was much surprised at the amount of liberty allowed

the prisoners, and also the number of personal belongings which we saw in the cells. All of them had pictures, and a comfortable chair of some kind, and in one I saw an illuminated scroll, 'After clouds cometh sunshine,' which struck me as very appropriate; and in another the prison-bed was covered with a magnificent coverlet of Nottingham lace with a pink lining. I was told afterwards the regulations of this Penitentiary were remarkably lenient; too much so, in fact, for the prisoners were constantly escaping.

One of the places which I enjoyed most was Cheyenne Mountain, which is far the most beautiful of the chain. There are two lovely cañons, up which it is possible to drive for some distance; and beside these there is a charming drive up the side of the mountain to the place where Helen Hunt Jackson (H.H.) is buried. The road is a very steep and difficult one, and it is absolutely necessary to have two good horses and a waggon with a brake which can be used on the way down. The ascent is about two thousand feet, and all along the road, as it winds round the side of the mountain, are the most beautiful and extended views over the prairie. The grave is in a very lonely spot, looking into a ravine. Mrs. Jackson was passionately fond of nature, and loved to spend hours alone on this mountain; and her wish to be buried there arose from her love of its great isolation. It is sad to see how far from realised her idea is. The place has become a haunt for tourists, who write their names not only on the trees, but on stones which they pile on the grave, until it looks like a rubbish heap. Mrs. Jackson desired that there should be no stone, and that the grave should be covered only by kini-kinic, a little running plant with red berries, of which she was very fond.

I have always felt a great admiration for her novel 'Ramona,' which she intended, it is said, to excite the same sympathy for the Indians which 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' did for the negroes; but I was told by persons who know the Indian race, that the picture of them is entirely ideal, and that Mrs. Jackson was a very imaginative and impulsive person.

One of the remarkable things which are shown to strangers is 'The Garden of the Gods'; indeed, I believe it is considered to be the great sight of the place, though I did not find it very interesting myself. This so-called garden is not, as might be imagined from its name, full of rippling streams, grassy turf, and flowers; it is, on the contrary, a collection of huge misshapen red rocks formed of sandstone, and bearing more or less resemblance to various objects which they are named for, such as Bear and Seal; and one, which is supposed to look like a head and shoulders, is called 'Aunt Sally.' The rocks are of an enormous size, which I only realised when I was told that a hole at the top of one of them, which looked to me about large enough to put my head through, was really wide enough for a carriage and horses to pass through. I do not think any one could

call it a beautiful place, and to me it seemed ugly and almost repulsive, as if Nature had made it an asylum for her deformed children. It gets its name, it is said, from the people who first lived there, an old negro couple called Jupiter and Juno.

I did not see anything during my visit which answered to my preconceived ideas of the roughness of Western life; but I suppose Colorado Springs can hardly be considered a Western town, for the population consists almost entirely of people from all parts of the country who come and go. Persons who lived there when the town first began to be built, however, can tell of a different state of things.

One lady told me that when she first came to live there twelve years ago, she and her sister brought revolvers with them, and as they had no idea how they were to be used, they made up their minds to practice, and selected as a target what they supposed to be an old barn. After they had fired several shots a little boy came timidly around the corner and said, 'Please, ma'am, mother says would you be so kind as to stop firing at our house. Your last shot went straight into the kitchen.'

Apparently the family did not feel any surprise at the incident, and as the heroine of the story remarked, she felt after it as if it was a mistake to say that there were no good manners in the West. This same lady told me that at that time the proportion of womankind in the place was so small that when there was any dancing the ladies were obliged to take a fresh partner for each figure of the láncers, in order that each of the gentlemen present might have a chance.

The first time I saw a ranch, I was lost in astonishment at its insignificance. I had supposed I should see large barns, enormous haystacks, and miles of fences; instead of which there was a little unpainted house in the midst of the prairie and nothing else, and I then began to realise that as the cattle lived on the prairie, and as the grass there is so poor that it requires from fifteen to twenty acres to feed one cow, there can of course be no enclosures. The cattle are branded and then left to roam where they please, and if the winter is severe and they are driven far south in search of food, they will not be all collected and brought home by the cow-boys until June. Then comes the spring *round-out*, when the different brands are separated, the calves which have been born are branded, and the year begins again. There are of course quantities of cattle to be seen everywhere, and every week droves of them would pass the house attended by cow-boys and dogs. I used to be much amused by the little colts which are allowed to follow their mothers when they are in harness, and one day I saw one in Tejon Street, where the shops are, which had lost its mother, and was running up and down the side walk neighing and looking into the doors of the shops in hopes of finding her.

It will easily be imagined that in a climate as dry as that of Colorado, there is not much vegetation. There are no trees except a low, bushy kind of oak called scrub-oak, aspens, and cotton-wood

trees. The latter are a very pretty delicate green, and grow luxuriantly; but they have a great defect, which is that the cotton-pods burst in the spring, and the cotton blows away, so that for several weeks the air seems to be full of it. It is very annoying to persons who have coughs, and it is very untidy in appearance. A freshly-mown lawn will be covered in half an hour with a fine white down, and one unfortunate stranger, who thought the spring would be a good time to have the outside of his house painted, found that the next day it looked as if it had been tarred and feathered. The water which supplies the town comes from the mountain streams, from which it is brought in pipes. All along the sides of the streets are little wooden ditches about six inches deep, and into these the water is turned once or twice a week. From these main ditches there are others under the ground which carry the water into the gardens, and when the plug is taken out it flows through them all over the grass and flower-beds. The supply of water is very plentiful, and the grounds around the houses look always green and fresh. Some of the ranches near the town have this system of irrigation, and can therefore raise fruit and vegetables; but as a rule, everything of that kind comes from a distance, particularly from Salt Lake City.

In the matter of wild-flowers, however, the case is entirely different, for they grow in the greatest profusion, and with such richness of colouring that if I had seen paintings of them before I saw the originals, I would not have believed that they could be true to Nature. I did not see any varieties which I was accustomed to at home, as I suppose only those kinds which can live without much water can grow in that soil.

The Yucca or Spanish bayonet is perhaps the most beautiful, with its tall stalks covered with pure white bells, and the long pointed leaves from which it gets its name. Another very curious one is the painter's brush, which is well named, for it has a bushy yellow blossom, with the tip shaded to deep red, giving just the effect which would be produced by dipping it in paint. Then there is the Mexican poppy, which has leaves and flowers of the same shape as our own poppy, but the flower is white, and the leaf is covered with prickles like a thistle. It was the first day of summer when I reached Colorado, and I found the trees in their first fresh green, and the prairie covered with flowers. When I left it was the first day of autumn, and the flowers had all passed in their season, till nothing remained but golden-rod and the gigantic sunflowers. The aspens had begun to turn yellow, and the leaves to fall, and I felt that perhaps it was well to leave them before their glory was departed; but I said good-bye to all the beautiful places where I had had so much enjoyment with the deepest regret, and I look back to the summer which I spent among the Rockies as a period of my life which has been without a cloud.

COMMENTS ON A PAGE OF THE 'FORTNIGHTLY.'

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'WIKKEY,' 'ANTON'S ZITHER,' ETC.

'THIS (the story of Panthea) is a story which matches in pathos and tenderness that of the half-mythic Alcestis, in self-devotion and heroism that of the nameless wife of Pontius. It is the answer to all who question the power of paganism to give that incentive to holy living and dying which they find in Christianity, and is the vindication of religion, however named, and of humanity, whatever its race. It shows that, let the outside garb of faith be what it will—the verbal form of consecration be to Allah or to Zeus, to Jehovah or to Christ—it is in the heart of man that the real divinity is to be found, the heart of man whence springs the true fountain of grace. Capable of the extremest nobleness when stirred by patriotism, love, unselfishness, by belief in something stronger than sense and purer than pleasure, it is by its own integral nobleness that humanity lifts itself to a level with the divine, making demigods of some and of others deiparæ. Herein lies one of the essential differences between that ancient life of Greece, and our modern forms of faith. In the earlier, men were responsible for their own moral state and held themselves the creators of their own spiritual condition. Sacrifice and offering were partly tribute paid to the gods for respect and honour, partly means to secure public blessings and prosperity. But there was nothing analogous to the modern doctrine of the desperate wickedness of the human heart; of how man can do nothing of himself; and of how all good gifts of thought and virtue come from God and are due to the operation of the Holy Spirit. The times were too free and life was too beautiful—love was too precious and patriotism too holy—for the morbid asceticism, the mental and moral self-mutilation which grew to be considered the *cor cordium* of true religion. The kindly gods were as many as there were human passions to restrain from excess and beautify into harmonious social elements, rather than to destroy altogether in the seclusion of a convent or the open-air prison of the desert; and it was only when one image alone became dominant over all the rest—only when sorrow and sacrifice took the place of joy and loving brotherhood—that this artistic perfection of life, this splendour of a many-sided humanity gave way to a unification which for a time swept all beauty and delight out of the world. It was as if the rainbow and the sun, the stars and the gentle moon, had faded out of the sky, and left nothing but storm clouds, red with blood and black with death, and the lighter mists of tears.'—'*Womanhood in Greece*,' by Mrs. E. Lynn Linton.

'My heart was hot within me . . . and at the last I spake with my tongue.' In these old words lies the excuse (if such be needed) for the writing of this paper. In one sense perhaps, and from a purely literary point of view, some words of excuse are needed when an unknown writer like myself dares to take the field against one so well known as the authoress of the two papers on 'Womanhood in Greece,' which have appeared in the course of the first half of this year in the 'Fortnightly Review,' and from which the page that furnishes my text is taken.

Unfair to take an isolated page and write a sermon on it? Without doubt a grave sin in criticism; but this is a case in which criticism, in the technical acceptation of the word, is not intended—nor would

indeed be possible to me. The classical knowledge shown in the articles, and the beauty and brilliancy of the writing, are quite beyond the small fry, who can but marvel at, not to say envy, the beautiful rhythmical language so full of life and colour, so instinct with energy. Pity! ten thousand pities! that their pages should be disfigured by an occasional want of delicacy mournfully suggestive of the power, so rare and so charming in the writings of a woman, having been allowed to degenerate into the over-frankness of the *esprit fort*, and by sneers at revealed religion (very irrelevant to the subject in hand) by which one who so little needs the easily attained piquancy of spiteful writing—and if I may dare to say it—one more generous towards those holding other beliefs, might have hesitated to wound those to whom Christianity and Holy Scripture are no mere matters of opinion and enthusiasm, but of life and death. It was the feeling that the page of beautiful writing which is the motive of my small paper would in all probability have been devoured with the rest of the article, with the swift interest and small discrimination often accorded to magazine papers, that urged me to make some comments thereon—for to me, certain kinds of periodical literature always seem the same sort of 'conscienceless thing' as operatic music did to 'Little schoolmaster Mark' the first time he heard it—and is it not a fact that much is tolerated, or perhaps scarcely perceived, in magazine-literature, which in another form would be quickly recognised for what in truth it is—simple poison?

My selected page begins in the midst of a picturesque outline of the story of Panthea (of which I must confess myself to have been previously ignorant) which the writer characterises as 'the answer to all who question the power of paganism to give that incentive to holy living and dying which they find in Christianity.' Now, the number and mental condition of such as fail to recognise the nobleness, grandeur, and heroism, shown by the highest type of pagan men and women, must be such as scarcely to be worthy of any very painstaking process of conviction; but the point at which most of us would differ with Mrs. Lynn Linton is this—are the so-called 'pagan virtues' really produced by paganism, as such, or are they not rather the good gifts of a generous God Who is 'not far from every one of us,' even from those who do not as yet know Him? That these primary, and, as it were, elementary virtues have as bright examples in Christian as in pagan history, none can well deny; patriotism, fortitude, truth, love, these are common to both; but in the train of Christianity follows a fair throng of virtues and graces of which the noblest spirits of the old classic world might only dimly dream, and which to the ordinary pagan mind would have appeared mere folly—'to the Greeks foolishness.'

Glancing now at this story of Panthea, truly a noble example of noble wifehood; faithful to her lord Abradates in his life, and when he fell slain in battle, seeking no happiness on earth without him, she

stabs herself, laying her head on his breast, and (as the writer expresses it) 'so ends all as true love would ever have it ended.' So far paganism—and the 'holy living and dying' to which it can give the incentive.

'As true love would ever have it end.' Yes, true love, but not the truest. How many a Christian wife with head bowed on the dead form of him who was dearer than life itself, would willingly, ah, how willingly! if it might be, breathe away her spirit and rejoin him, instead of facing the terrible future of loneliness; but the longing is crushed down and the bowed head lifted, and the lone woman goes forth to live, not die, for him she has lost, to live for the children he has left to her, to carry on the work he has begun; or if these things be lacking, to consecrate her sorrow and love—love grown maybe to a yet Higher Love—to the lonely and suffering of earth. Thus has it ever been since Christianity has come to bless those who are 'widows indeed,' and do we not all know some of these black-robed angels moving about among us and smiling, it may be, prosaically enough, that the twilight of their lives may not dim the brightness of happier ones! I doubt whether 'Old Greece' produced women such as these. It is from this story, and of course the many glorious tales of ancient history which from childhood have thrilled us with enthusiastic admiration, that the writer would have us infer that the form of religion signifies nothing, and that 'it is in the heart of man that the real divinity is to be found, the heart of man whence springs the true fountain of grace;' and that humanity lifts itself by its own 'integral (?) nobleness' to the level of the Divine. Here it seems to me that Mrs. Linton surpasses the Greeks themselves in her worship of humanity—for surely they did not attribute to their demi-gods (as she would seem to imply) the merit of having raised themselves by their own nobleness to their semi-divine position; and on what grounds we are bidden to regard the human heart as containing the true fountain of grace, it is not easy to see—especially if, as the writer goes on to show, that fountain may be considered as free from any taint of natural depravity. Why if, looking at it broadly, good is better than evil, does not this heart of man turn to it instinctively? And—for the moment, turning our eyes from Greece which our authoress has vignetted so beautifully as almost to make us forget the existence of the nations around lying in what depths of degradation, let history tell—where was the true divinity of the human heart in the latter days of Imperial Rome? Looking nearer home also, how are we to account for the awful evil abounding in our great modern towns? We Christians, however strong in our belief in the ultimate triumph of good, can as yet only sorrowfully confess 'an enemy hath done this,' and conscious, each one, of our own individual strife with evil, recognise only too clearly the presence within us of the taint of sin. Still have we to pray, 'Thy Kingdom come,' and well for us that it

is not to the divinity of our own hearts that we have to turn for the hope of that day.

But why does Mrs. Linton speak of the doctrine of the sinfulness of the human heart as modern? Whatever view is taken of the theory (speaking now as those to whom it is a theory and not a certainty) it cannot with any historical accuracy be called a modern one. From a rough chronological calculation we find that about four centuries before the Greek fleet set out for the siege of Troy, Job was in sore perplexity between the evil he knew to be inherent in his heart and the moral integrity to which he had attained, and which he refused to deny at the instance of his friends; and about six centuries before the brilliant days of Pericles, David mourned that he was 'shapen in wickedness.'

I am assuming that in whatever light the writings of the Old Testament are looked upon as regards Inspiration, their historical antiquity at least remains undisputed.

A brilliant picture truly, is that of Athens in her glory, when Pericles, the Olympian, held his fellow-citizens, high and low, entranced by the splendour of his eloquence—when Socrates was digging deep into 'the roots of things,' ever seeking the *why* of life and its problems —when the second Pallas Athene was rising in majesty and beauty under the hand of Pheidias to dwell within the Parthenon the crowning glory of Athens—and when Aspasia, of whom we say, not in exultation but in extenuation, that she was a pagan, was exercising the fascination of her beauty and her genius over the finest spirits of Athens. A brilliant and captivating picture which any of us possessing a grain of feeling for art and beauty, must rejoice over and glory in; nevertheless, we cannot allow the insinuation to pass unnoticed that it was Christianity that overshadowed the beauty and happiness. No less than three centuries elapsed between the times of which the days of Pericles formed the culminating point, and the opening of the Christian era—and are we to believe that 'the happy life of the Greeks' continued without interruption till it became quenched in what the writer considers the gloom of Christianity? Could there have been much of 'joy and loving brotherhood' during the Macedonian empire, or in the Roman, at the date of the Christian era? In words painful to read and more painful to write, our authoress tells us that it was 'only when one Image alone became dominant over the rest—only when sorrow and sacrifice took the place of joy and loving brotherhood—that this artistic perfection of life, this splendour of a many-sided humanity, gave way to a unification which for a time swept away all beauty and delight out of the world'; going on then to describe in one of her peculiarly rythmical sentences the blotting out of all beauty and delight by storm-clouds, red with blood and black with death; for it is in these words that she characterises the spread of the Christian Faith.

Doubtless, to the outward eye, Christianity was in its beginning a religion full of sorrow and sacrifice, in that it incurred the ruthless hatred of the pagan world, and that its professors underwent tortures indescribable at its hands; but with all this, we know also as a fact that the calm joy shown by these despised persons amazed all ranks amongst their enemies. One doubts whether any of those early Christian men and women would have allowed that joy and loving brotherhood had left the earth, though, seeing how impossible it must have appeared to the followers of the Christ to breathe the polluted atmosphere of the heathen cities, it is hardly to be wondered at, that many should have betaken themselves to convents and to the deserts for freedom's sake. Frankly, too, we concede that Christianity did at first mar the 'artistic perfection' of life. Art flourishes not in troublous times, but no sooner was Christianity firmly established, than she asserted herself again and began to work out her new mission—witness the Roman mosaics and the Lateran Church, dating from the fourth century—about the same length of time from the Christian era as had elapsed between that and the subjugation of Athens by the Macedonians.

On the deeper aspects of the great event which has changed the face of the world I am not touching—it is no defence of the Faith that I am attempting, I am simply wishful to show how much beautiful and artistic writing may contain of inaccuracy, which, coming from one who is manifestly not of us, might prove very injurious to the undiscriminating. And my last word will be on what seems to me a curious oversight on the part of one, so much at home in the life of old Greece as Mrs. Lynn Linton. Often as she quotes passages from the Greek Tragedies, apparently she does not regard their very existence as making against the theory so prevalent at the present moment of the brilliancy, beauty, and glory of old pagan life, so free from what some allow themselves to call the morbidness and gloom of Christianity. Since, as I cannot but believe, the poets of a people are raised above their fellows to speak for them what they are powerless to utter, powerless, perhaps, even to recognise in their own hearts; believing also that a true poet is the property of all nations under the sun, yet I hold that before all things they are *national*—voices of their own time and race. Could Shakespere, the possession now of all the civilised world, have been Shakespere had he not first been English? If this be true, what a hidden vein of deepest melancholy must there have been in a people from whose midst arose the Greek Tragedies!—tragedies more tragic than any that have been since the Christian era (speaking of course of works that have lived), not excepting even our own Othello—a people who not only produced the poets, but were able, great and small, to appreciate their works, witnessing their representation not alone with understanding but critically. It is by her poetry that old Greece lives on through the centuries even more than by her art—and much more, may I not add,

than by the ideal descriptions of the modern worshippers of the 'Violet crowned.'

Prometheus the great-hearted, chained to the rock, a victim to his unconquerable yearning to raise those, who, on his human side, were his brethren, a sacrifice to the 'Weltschmerz,' with which many a noble heart aches in our own day; this was the pagan ideal of sacrifice—an ideal so great, so magnificent, that some venture to look on the demi-god of old as a type of Him Who for love of those whose Brother He had stooped to become, allowed Himself to be fastened to the Cross which has for ever consecrated sorrow and sacrifice for the followers of the Thorn-Crowned.

YAM.

NOTE.—Hawthorne in a remarkable passage in *Transformations* notes the sad element in all high classical art. The slave whispering of Death to the Victor in his triumphal car, the ring of Polycrates, the dialogue of Solon and Crœsus, all witness to the intense mournfulness and uncertainty of the Pagan at his best, believing both in retribution and in the absolute jealousy of the gods, though some might perchance rise to the level of Æschylus's chorus—

'Falsely, I ween, the sages told
In parables they framed of old,
That glad success and fortune high
Beget an evil progeny;
'Tis guilt alone that teems with sorrow,
Who from her mother's hue her sombre tint must borrow.'

CONVERSATION ON THE MOTHERS' UNION.

BY THE EDITOR.

S. We are always coming to you with questions. What do you think about the Mothers' Union? Here is Eleanor urged to set one going in her parish, and not knowing anything about it.

A. Here is a little pink book called 'The Need of the Mothers' Union' (Warren, Winchester), which will tell you what you want to know.

E. We certainly do want some means of raising the tone of our women. Of course, I know of some nice careful ones, who really do the best for their children, and turn them out just what one could wish; but the average poor woman, even when fairly respectable, seems to think all that can be required of her is to feed and clothe her children, and send them to school. She doesn't seem to exercise any control besides, except beating them if they do violent mischief, or any of the things that the public opinion of the place disapproves. She lets them—girls and all—run wild at night—'get about,' as they call it; and if they come home from service, they get utterly spoilt by the rough, uncontrolled habits allowed at home.

S. Oh! I am sure our women are not like that.

E. Yes; but your parish has been looked after for a great many years. Ours has been neglected till now. Fancy a woman telling me, when I remonstrated, that she had nothing to give her children but their liberty, so she gave them that!

A. I suppose a great deal is from ignorance.

E. Most of them can read and write.

A. That was not what I meant. I think the generation who, a hundred or eighty years ago, began on principle to cultivate the poor, hardly understood all the needs. They worked at the religious instruction, which of course was most important, but they did not realise how little what they taught could be carried out without an improvement in the homes and habits.

S. But some of their poor were very good.

A. Yes, carrying the principles into daily life; but it took much superiority to be able to apply them.

S. And was not the present life much rougher?

A. Certainly. When my mother first came to this place, nearly seventy years ago, and, indeed, long after I can remember it, the women, except those who were actually ailing, all did field work—perhaps keeping one day in the week for washing and setting to rights. The eldest child, from the time it could toddle, was in charge of the younger ones, dragging about the lanes or in the street. I remember heart-burnings over the impossibility of teaching the poor thing anything effectively in Sunday-school alone. Then, when week-day schools were begun, the middle ones of the family went, till tiny boys could begin 'bird-starving' or pig-keeping; and when

the eldest girl went out to sink or swim in a little rough place, No. 2 became family nurse. As to the poor mother, she went out early, came home fagged and tired, dragged through the absolutely necessary work as best she could, but could attempt no niceties, hardly any training, even if she had ever known of such things, and unless she had been a servant, she had not. Some women had wonderful energy and high principle, and did manage to keep their houses and children perfect models, but they wore themselves out prematurely; and, indeed, the women in general began to look aged and haggard before they were thirty. The struggle for the mere necessaries of life was so severe, and there were so many generations of ignorance in the background, that attempts at refining them were exceedingly difficult, and failed on generation after generation.

E. Were they always wise?

A. Perhaps not. They were made in equal ignorance of possibilities, and were often autocratic and often prying. I remember a story where the model young lady, somewhere about twelve or fourteen years old, walks into a cottage, scolds the mistress thereof for her untidiness, and even peeps into the pot on the fire, and censures the cookery!

S. Did people bear that?

A. There was more submission to the squire's and clergyman's families in those days, so that it was not very common to manifest any resentment at the interference, whatever might have been felt. Perhaps one or two families in a whole parish were either a little better off, or else were too wild and independent to submit, and we used to consider the first as fine and conceited, the last as wild, wicked, and irreclaimable—and so in fact they generally were. Some, especially where the mother had been civilised by domestic service, were conformable, and very excellent people grew up; but the general run, I am afraid, put on a surface, as far as they knew how, to please the ladies, but without in the least really changing their habits. Often the cottage arrangements were such that they absolutely could hardly do so.

E. I am afraid that is still often the case.

A. Not so much as it was, since landlords have awakened to a sense of their duties. Besides, wages are higher, and every article of furniture is cheaper than in those days.

S. But you were telling us why the good works of those days did not do more good.

A. Nay; they did much, and we are feeling it, now that it has soaked in, so to say. But one mistake was, I think, the not distinguishing between finery and refinement, and the dread of 'unfitting the poor for their station, by giving them tastes they could not indulge.'

E. Do you mean that it was like the alteration Dickens (I think) represents being made in Watts's hymn—

> 'In work, work, work, in work alway,
> Let my first years be past.'

A. Well, really it resulted in something like that. The model family, as you see them represented in the stories of fifty or sixty years ago, or rather more, do not seem to have had any recreations. Singing—even in Church—was held to be a dangerous gift, as leading to entertainments in the public-house. Fairs were the chief excitement, and the bad children in stories always came to grief at them. Even the school feast was nothing but a bun apiece; and the old hereditary sports had become connected with so much coarseness and drinking, that they were abolished, if possible, instead of being purified. It really seemed as if everything was done to connect dulness with religion.

E. And was it not so with dress?

A. The ladies sometimes pushed sumptuary laws so far as to cause a rebellion. The most fertile cause of dispute was the children's hair, and it must be confessed that the fashion was highly undesirable. Little girls wore curls all round, which could only be kept in order, except in happy exceptions favoured by nature, by being twisted up all night in curl papers. This was misery to the young lady.

S. Oh, yes; I remember in Holiday House how Laura slept on a circle of things like walnuts.

A. And though of course the young *lady* was combed and curled every morning by her nurse; the aspiring mother, who was her own maid-of-all-work, would leave the *chevaux de frise* of curl papers all day on her child's head to prepare for a grand appearance in the evening. So, very rightly, there was an absolute enactment against coming to school in curl papers; but many ladies carried the rule too far, and insisted on every child having short hair. Now I think cleanliness and neatness were all they had a right to call for, and that when they clipped with their own scissors neatly-kept curls, they tyrannised, and the resentment they roused certainly did harm. Their argument was that long hair could not possibly be kept in proper order in a cottage, and that to permit exceptions was allowing bad examples, and fostering vanity.

S. I suppose it was vanity.

A. If it was treated as wrong, it became a vanity; and the upshot of these attempts at enforcing plainness, short hair, absolute lack of ornament, and the like, was to alienate bettermost families. Ladies have been known to insist on a bit of braid being taken off a pinafore, and the consequence often was that the child's longing was concentrated on the prettiness denied. So that there was a great outbreak of finery upon emancipation, and beauty was unjustly associated in their minds.

S. But it was hardly beauty. Tawdry gaudiness.

A. It was the idea of beauty of a perfectly untrained taste—and there was no notion of training it. Something of the Puritan lingered in people's notions, and they tried to enforce that the cottager and his family should wear a garb as plain as that of monks, and be equally indifferent to all kinds of pleasure.

S. But the pleasures were bad—public-houses, fairs, mayings, and so forth.

A. They were full of temptations but the mistake was in denouncing them without providing anything better; so that the average young people, who longed for change and amusement, were led to confound them with evil, and ran into temptation. They really had some excuse for connecting monotony with religion. Then the ladies—who had taught them as children—missed the hold over them as they grew up, and the more critical years of youth and girlhood passed without training or influence, except over the household servants. In fact, there was school religious training up to a certain point, stopping at ten or twelve years old; afterwards—nothing, and goodness often made repellently strict. There was little or no opportunity of infusing ideas of modesty or teaching how love and courtship should be regarded; the subject was systematically avoided—and the cottage mother was both ignorant herself and too hard worked to attend to the delicacies of life. It seems to me, likewise, that there was little warning or realisation of the real dangers, such as rude manners and conversation. People, though warning against dress, dancing, and public-houses and fairs, did everything, and did not go deep enough. In many cases, too, the cottages were too much crowded for decency.

E. You have come to much what is the state of our parish, only the women don't go out to work, and gossip at their doors, and quarrel, and read bad papers.

A. Yes; when first machines diminished women's field labour, the outcome was gossip. And an untaught woman's mind tends to sadly coarse gossip, and vehement love of excitement. But I think, with time and opportunity, the more sensible women are learning their uses at home, and do wash and cook, and mend, and make for their husbands and children. They start with a little more education, and in some cases, the houses are better. The cottage parlour, though many think it nonsensical and useless, is really an education in nicety and refinement, besides being of positive value in times of sickness and convalescence. Altogether, there is more hope in dealing with them than there would have been with their mothers; but as they have mostly been untaught, this Mothers' Union endeavours to inspire them with a sense of their responsibility, and to give them hints that they can carry out.

E. What kind of hints?

A. I can't well go into details. You will find many in 'A Letter to the Mothers of Little Children,' also 'A Letter to Mothers,' and 'A Letter to Fathers,' showing them their own mighty power and influence—telling them how to contrive with curtains and the like even in small cottages—entreating them to be careful as to words and papers and books, not to take lodgers without proper space, and to forbid running loose at night.

S. Well, but there are hosts of little books of advice, and stories which do so.

A. True, but somehow things need to be brought closer home.

E. What then is the thing to do?

A. I will tell you what has been done. Of course it is far, very far, from being infallible; but I do believe is is raising the general tone. Get the women together, and then let a lady who can speak—face to face—heart to heart—herself a mother if possible—talk to them of what is in their hands, speaking as she could not speak to mixed hearers, and dwelling on the baptismal purity to be guarded in the little ones. They will attend as to no book or sermon, and be greatly moved. Then let all who are willing sign cards pledging them to a few simple rules for preserving their children from bad language, improprieties, drink and wildness, and give them a short prayer to use for their children. The greater number of them will be very willing and grateful, especially the young ones in the earliest pride of motherhood, before bad habits have been formed.

E. Should it be only the nice respectable ones?

A. Any one who seems inclined to do well among the married women had better be admitted. Many who have not been satisfactory themselves are ready to be the more anxious about their daughters.

E. Then how is it to be kept up?

A. The ordinary Mothers' Meeting gives the opportunity for reading the little books of practical hints, and sometimes for discussing them, and there, in some parishes, an annual service in church with a special address to the mothers, and afterwards a tea, when new members may be enrolled. It is a good thing if all classes can be enrolled, ladies, farmer's wives, and village tradespeople, as well as the poor, and with good management it can be done.

E. But they don't need to be taught such things.

A. Not exactly, but the binding together by a pledge to guard the baptismal purity of their children, and to put up one common prayer for them is well for all. Another great point is to show the mothers that modesty and decorum are the same in all classes, and that the purity of their children, boys and girls alike, should be their great desire, and to be worked for in details of home propriety, and teaching the boys to behave properly to the girls. And one more great point is to keep the schools most carefully guarded on those points. The way to improve a parish is for clergy and ladies to use their utmost influence, but no one in details can do so much as a schoolmistress, except of course the mothers. So schoolmistresses and assistants should be instructed to be watchful over the playground. And the ladies should make a great point of correcting rude manners and preventing undesirable games, such as are sometimes tolerated at festivals.

DEBATABLE GROUND.

Is verbal truthfulness always the highest duty?

This is a good and clear debate. The two sides are ably and distinctly defended. Without answering in the abstract the question 'What is truth?' it is obvious that all agree that truth of character means *trustworthiness*, and that all alike set the highest value on it. The two views taken are—

1st.—That this trustworthiness consists in the absolute inviolate accuracy of the spoken word under all circumstances.

2nd.—That it consists rather, in the first instance, in the absolute trustworthiness of a given promise, or of an inward sense of honour or obligation, even at the cost, in the last resort, of verbal accuracy.

There is a further division of opinion between those who consider equivocations and evasions, i.e. 'half-truths,' allowable so long as verbal accuracy is maintained, and those who regard 'words spoken with intent to deceive,' as equivalent to direct falsehood.

Now, whatever trials may arise from stress of feeling, or however we may regard it as allowable to be swayed by questions of expediency, the real moral difficulty only occurs when a previous trust would be betrayed by present speaking of the truth. John Inglesant, for instance, when he perjured himself to keep the King's secret, distinctly committed to his charge, was in a different situation from Jeanie Deans, when she spoke the truth rather than perjure herself to save her sister's life. The one had to settle a nice point of honour; the other to choose between honour and affection.

The subject seems to divide into three heads. Questions of social custom and courtesy, questions of feeling and affection, and questions of honour and obligation. With regard to the first head, which seems much to exercise many correspondents, many others have wisely advised cultivating feelings of Christian kindliness, so that its expression may not be insincere. And certainly Chelsea China thinks that if people cultivate a decent amount of patience and geniality, they may manage to find truthful phrases of courtesy somewhere between 'How delightful!' and 'What a bore!' Besides, as we advance in life, the sight of uncongenial company ceases to cause such violent affliction. Most people know the story told, Chelsea China thinks, of Sir Walter Scott, that when called upon to admire an ugly baby, he

used to say, 'Well! That *is* a baby!' and the anecdote of S. T. Coleridge, who, when a bad singer had sung after much pressing, said, 'The next time, Madam, you say that you cannot sing we shall know how to believe you.' But though these great men displayed both cleverness and courtesy, how far they saved their sincerity may be more doubtful.

With regard to established phrases, such as 'Not at home,' Chelsea China thinks that it depends upon how far they *are* established in the place and circle in which we move.

Chelsea China does not think that people who feel this difficulty are likely to fall into the kind of effusiveness which *is* insincere, and recommends thinking as little as possible about the condition of our social feelings. On the other hand, she gives it as her view, that if a direct question is *asked*, such as, 'Is this figure in drawing?' 'Did she sing in tune?' people should give their real opinion as civilly as possible.

Under the head of questions of feeling and affection, Chelsea China would class all the escapes in disguise, all the stock instances of hiding the King in a cupboard, all use of false names and false passports, all cases where the saving of life is the main idea. And in another way under this head would come the question of deceiving an invalid under doctor's orders where agitation might turn the scale. The question to be asked is whether, as the saving of life makes killing no murder, it also makes falsehood no lie.

It is obvious to common sense that no disguise could be maintained, no false name used without *verbal* as well as actual untruthfulness. Large exceptions to the rule seem, therefore, to have been made under this head. Can they be justified except by maintaining that the saving a life, unjustly threatened, and for which we are in any way responsible, constitutes an obligation above that of verbal truthfulness?

Chelsea China wishes to point out, what she thinks all her correspondents have not perceived, that a honourable man *might* decide in these cases to risk the truth for truth's sake; while if he were placed in the situation of John Inglesant, or in any case where the keeping of his plighted word was in question, he would find himself face to face with a different problem altogether, which he might decide quite differently.

There is no question but that in real life secrets entrusted to us of vital consequence can sometimes only be guarded by words of direct untruth. The very suspicion of our knowledge might give the clue.

The difficulty is very great, because if the moral sense of mankind once admits a doubt of the verbal accuracy of honourable men and women, their honour ceases to be the same safeguard. At the same time, the direct verbal untruth is often the only way to guard the actual knowledge, committed to the safeguard of honourable silence.

And how can helpful and sympathetic people refuse to share such dangerous knowledge, when they can help by action or advice?

Rudge, in her very interesting essay, says that regard for verbal truthfulness dates from the days of chivalry; but is not this rather true of regard to the plighted word? as when King John of France returned on failing to collect his ransom. This is not the same thing as being particular as to the absolute accuracy of ordinary statement.

Gray Squirrel gives very useful advice on practical ways of avoiding dilemmas of the kind, especially as to discussing people's affairs with other people, and getting into the habit of unnecessarily showing letters, and also wisely says that after all such truth *can* only be told as the hearer can assimilate. She concludes with, 'The grand old proverb, "Let the truth be told, though the heavens fall." They have not fallen yet.'

Polly and *F. McLean* chiefly discuss whether it is always necessary to tell everything, rather than whether truth may ever be concealed by a falsehood.

Eleanor dwells chiefly on the social difficulty of combining truth with politeness, and says very truly that we must cultivate the inward feelings that make truth polite, and politeness truth.

Benedict considers absolute truth in word and deed to be invariably the highest duty. *Crescens* and *Dorigen* take the same view. So does *Gillian*, who contrasts it, however, with *spiritual* truth, not with necessary concealment.

E. M. O. B. thinks that no claim of friendship or expediency can override that of absolute truthfulness.

Torfrida certainly does not think that verbal truthfulness is *always* the highest duty, and goes very far in defending the advisability of preventing mischief by a false statement, even when bound by no previous promise.

Popinjay.—Some persons consider it a breach of verbal truthfulness to say 'not at home' to visitors unless one is out, to welcome people one is not glad to see. But by using these current phrases of society, one does not intend to deceive anybody. For example, in being civil to visitors one does not care about, it is not necessary to make them think one likes them, but simply to avoid annoying them by showing dislike. The stereotyped words used have from long custom lost all meaning save that of mere civility, unless specially enforced by look or action. Of course, it may be said, it is unfortunate that one is bound to use so many meaningless words, and that if any reform is to be attempted, some few must be willing to incur the odium of breaking a foolish custom; but for most of us this sort of reform had better begin from within by cultivating sympathy and charity which will make our courtesy more real. And if, on the one hand, we lament having to say what we do not fully mean, let us be thankful, on the other hand, that the inherited courtesy of generations of civilisation enables us to do so without deceiving others, and let us try to act up

to the meaning of these words instead of dwelling only on the fact that they are beyond what we mean, so that the very fact of having to be polite may help us to be sympathetic. But of course in these little matters care is needed—one may easily glide into petty deceptions.

The Muffin Man.—It's certainly very difficult to be truthful in the present age. Shams are rampant on all sides; there is little real friendship and social intercourse in society. The richest and greatest are sought out, and people are always pretending to be what they are not, and so much pretence has now come to be accepted truth, that it is difficult to know where truth ends and falsehood commences. One thing is quite certain, it is far better to be truthful—if possible, even where offence must be given—than to be too polite; and though the world would be unbearable if every one said just what they felt, it would be much more bearable than it often is at present if people would be real and true, and themselves, and not a sham.

X. Y. Z.—I feel that verbal truth is a most valuable habit, but yet that as an universal duty it is over-estimated by ordinary moralists. I cannot see that when Madame Grotius had put her husband in the chest, and accounted for its weight by saying, 'You know what great books my husband is in the habit of reading,' she was more truthful than if she had said, 'This chest is full of remarkably heavy books.' In each case the point was to convey an untrue impression to the mind of the officials, and whether this is done by words verbally true or verbally untrue, seems a very trivial question.

The question then is, are we bound never under any circumstances to convey an untrue impression to the minds of others? Happy are those to whom the question has never arisen. But it appears to me that we have frequently to defend others, as Madame Grotius did, by producing an untrue impression in the mind of a third person. Secrets are confided to us which affect the happiness or the honour of the confider; if we are questioned about them by a third party, it appears to me to be the only true truthfulness to keep our word, even at the cost of the verbal truthfulness which we prize so highly. Anything short of this is practically revealing the secret confided to us. At the same time it is, or ought to be, a most painful duty to have to lie, no matter with what motives, and the doing so seems to me a matter for which, for the sake of the conscience of the world, we must be content to face obloquy, remembering that 'then the work of life is tried By a juster Judge than here.'

Spermologos.—We all agree that truth in intention is a Christian's duty, as led by the Holy Spirit of truth. The real question is, whether falsehood is justifiable where concealment is necessary, and truth might betray a trust.

No one doubts that silence is permissible. Only an oath in a court of justice enforces the *whole* truth; and where the purpose is honest and necessary, I believe a semi-truth may rightly be used. As when

St. Athanasius, finding himself pursued down the Nile, turned back, and meeting the enemy, was interrogated where Athanasius had gone, and answered, 'He was going down the Nile a short time ago.' Such evasions are only justifiable in such cases. But I think that while such may be allowed, a half-truth covering a whole one in extreme cases; that still a positive falsehood is absolutely wrong, and that the predicament ought to be viewed as one of the temptations where we are promised a way to escape, and that the duty is to trust in God, and let Him find it. There is no instance of untruth in the New Testament, except the one so awfully punished, and though the sin there involved far more than the actual lie, still the teaching is of the absolute necessity of a truth far above that of the elder times.

Perhaps St. Paul's appeal in the Sanhedrim, 'I am a Pharisee,' etc., may be taken as an instance of the lawfulness of a half-truth, as long as it is unaccompanied by actual falsehood, and is with a right intention, such as to save life, to guard a trust, or to avoid doing mischief; but when it comes to positive utterance of a lie, I believe the rule is strict against the sin.

Chelsea China cannot decide the difficult question. But she would like to say that innocent, rash, and inexperienced people should beware of putting others into this great difficulty by pressing them with unauthorised questions. It is a difficulty which is not confined to rare and romantic situations.

She would remind her readers that further remarks on this debate are now invited, should any such occur to them.

Subject for September.

Does Idealism help or hinder daily life?

By Idealism is meant, not imagination, but a high and exacting standard of perfection.

Answers to be sent to Chelsea China, care of the Publisher, before October 1st.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

History of Rome.

Questions for September.

33. State the aims of the three political parties in Rome (B.C. 133–129).

Who were their principal leaders?

34. What were the Sempronian Laws? Describe the Second Tribunate, and death of Caius Gracchus.

35. Write a short life of Jugurtha.

36. Sketch the events which preceded the Battles of Aquæ Sextiæ and Vercellæ.

April Class List.

First Class.

Grasshopper	39	Sophonisba, Clotho, Rags, Emu	31
Moonraker, Robin	37	Stanzerl, Elpis, Vorwärts, Tortoise, Ignavus	30
C Minor	34		
Speranza	33		
Lisle, Lachesis, Water-wagtail, Charissa, White Cat	32		

Second Class.

Bluebell, Popinjay, Livy, Woodpecker, Atropos, C Major	29	Lille Fröken, Wood-violet	26
Chrysé, Mabel, Terpsichore, Madge Wildfire, Deryn, Glaucia	28	Marius, Fidelia, Lily, Claudia	25
Repullulat, Midge, Budgerigar, Spearmaid, Carlo	27	Carlotta, Fieldfare, Romola, Portia (Ealing), Horatius	24
		Antwortende, Daddy Darwin, Countess	23
		Neæra	21

Third Class.

Portia	19	Zugvogel	5

REMARKS.

13. *Mabel:* When Decius was about to devote himself to death for the good of his country, he was instructed by the Chief Pontifex to veil himself with the toga prætexta, and then to put forth his hand from under the robe to hold it to his face, while he stood on a javelin, and repeated a prayer to all the gods, asking them to accept his expiation, and destroy the enemies of Rome. It is important to observe, that this famous self-sacrifice was no mere rash impulse of heroism, but a solemn act of religious worship, which enables us to understand the awe and despondency with which it was regarded by the hostile army.

Many students seem at a loss to know why the Roman commanders prohibited single combats on this occasion. It was neither from fear of treachery, nor from a sense of the sinfulness of a war with their old brothers-in-arms; but simply because it would have been folly to allow the bravest champions to waste their lives in private quarrels, when all were needed for the great contest.

White Cat, Tortoise, Portia, and others, omit the stratagem of Manlius, who armed his Accensi, or supernumeraries, keeping back his Triarii, or reserve of veterans, till the Latius had spent their strength on the inferior troops first opposed to them.

Rags: the Legion, in the times of Marius and Cæsar, contained sixty centuries, not six:—thus, 1 Legion=10 Cohorts; 1 Cohort=3 Maniples; 1 Maniple=2 Centuries.

Fieldfare: Pyrrhus did not introduce the Macedonian military system. On the contrary, the Greek phalanx, or close order of battle, was that originally employed by the Romans, and exchanged (before his invasion) for the freer movement of the Roman Legion, with its three divisions of Hastati, Principes, and Triarii.

14. The Second Samnite War was virtually ended by the capture of Bovianum (the modern Bojano), chief town of the Pentrian Samnites, at the foot of Mount Matese, in B.C. 305. This is omitted by *Repullulat, Elpis, Madge Wildfire,* and others.

Bluebell is less accurate than usual in saying that the Romans were victorious at Lautulæ in Apulia. The victory was won by the Samnites, and Lautulæ was not in Apulia, but on the Latin coast, near Terracina.

Atropos: Fabius was not killed at Lautulæ: he lived to follow the triumphal procession of his son Fabius Gurges, at the end of the Third Samnite War.

Woodpecker: it was the Romans, not the Etruscans, who made a forty years' truce with Tarquinii, a famous city of Etruria, the birthplace of Tarquinius Priscus.

15. *Moonraker:* the second Publilian Law, requiring the Curiæ to assent beforehand to the Acts of the Centuriate Assembly, did not

allow them the right of deciding what matters were fit to be regulated by it. 'Whatever law was proposed by the Senate to the Centuries (and no measure could originate with the latter) was to be considered as having the sanction of the Curiæ also.'—Arnold's 'Rome,' Vol. II. ch. 29.

The Public Rights of a Roman citizen were the Jus Suffragii and the Jus Honorum; the Private Rights were the Jus Connubii, the Jus Commercii, and the Jus Hereditatis, etc. *Antwortende* omits the Jus Honorum; *Terpsichore* the Jus Hereditatis. The question referred to those rights only which were common to all who possessed the full citizenship, *optimo jure cives*. *Speranza* and *Charissa*, therefore, are incorrect in including the Jus Imaginum, which belonged only to the Nobiles.

16. It is well to notice, that one part of the famous Via Appia was that 'lower road' along the coast from Terracina towards Capua, which was in danger of been occupied by the enemy in the Second Samnite War; while the 'upper road,' which the Romans fortified with the colonies of Fregellæ, Casinum, and Interamna, was the Via Latina.

Lachesis: Appius did not obtain a knowledge of the Dies Fasti et Nefasti, through his agent C. Flavius, who, as the son of a freedman, could not have known them; but, on the contrary, Flavius obtained it through his patrician employer.

Portia mistakes Appius the Censor for his ancestor Appius the Decemvir.

Notices to Correspondents.

The daughter of an intimate friend of Scott's assures us that there is not the slightest doubt of the lines in the 'Monastery' being original.

The Editor for once brings forward a private case, hoping that some friends may be moved to help. Eight orphans of the lower middle-class, whose father and mother died within two days of one another, are left on the hands of a cousin in delicate health, who supports herself by going out nursing. Five are too young to do anything for themselves. Subscriptions to enable her to provide for their present needs would be very welcome, and still more so nominations to orphanages. Any such will be received thankfully by the Editor, who will answer any inquiries.

'The Ladies' Association for Promoting Female Education in India and other countries in connection with the S. P. G.,' will hold a meeting in St. Mary's Schools, Wolverhampton, during the Church Congress week. A stall with work and curiosities from the schools of the Association will be held by Miss L. Phillimore in the Ecclesiastical Art Exhibition during the whole of the Congress week.

Dolores Mohun did not know much about her aunts when she said Phyllis had married a missionary.

The Monthly Packet.

OCTOBER, 1887.

BEECHCROFT AT ROCKSTONE.

BY THE EDITOR.

CHAPTER X.

AUT CÆSAR AUT NIHIL.

EXAMINATIONS were the great autumn excitement. Gillian was going up for the higher Cambridge, and Valetta's form was under preparation for competition for a prize in languages. The great Mr. White, on being asked to patronise the High School at its first start, four years ago, had endowed it with prizes for each of the four forms for the most proficient in two tongues.

As the preparation became more absorbing, brows were puckered and looks were anxious, and the aunts were doubtful as to the effect upon the girls' minds or bodies. It was too late, however, to withdraw them, and Miss Mohun could only insist on air and exercise, and permit no work after the seven-o'clock tea.

She was endeavouring to chase cob-webs from the brains of the students by the humours of Mrs. Nickleby, when a message was brought that Miss Leverett, the head-mistress of the High School, wished to speak to her in the dining-room. This was no unusual occurrence, as Miss Mohun was secretary to the managing committee of the High School. But on the announcement Valetta began to fidget, and presently said that she was tired and would go to bed. The most ordinary effect of fatigue upon this young lady was to make her resemble the hero of the nursery poem—

> 'I do not want to go to bed
> Sleepy little Harry said.'

Nevertheless, this willingness excited no suspicion, till Miss Mohun came to the door to summon Valetta.

'Is there anything wrong?' exclaimed sister and niece together.

'Gone to bed! Oh! I'll tell you presently. Don't you come, Gillian.'

She vanished again, leaving Gillian in no small alarm and vexation.

'I wonder what it can be,' mused Aunt Ada.

'I shall go and find out!' said Gillian, jumping up, as she heard a door shut upstairs.

'No, don't,' said Aunt Ada, 'you had much better not interfere.'

'It is my business to see after my own sister,' returned Gillian haughtily.

'I see what you mean, my dear,' said her aunt, stretching out her hand kindly; 'but I do not think you can do any good. If she is in a scrape, you have nothing to do with the High School, and for you to burst in would only annoy Miss Leverett and confuse the affair. Oh, I know your impulse of defence, dear Gillian; but the time has not come yet, and you can't have any reasonable doubt that Jane will be just, nor that your mother would wish that you should be quiet about it.'

'But suppose there is some horrid accusation against her!' said Gillian hotly.

'But, dear child, if you don't know anything about it, how can you defend her?'

'I ought to know!'

'So you will in time; but the more people there are present, the more confusion there is, and the greater difficulty in getting at the rights of anything.'

More by her caressing tone of sympathy than by actual arguments, Adeline did succeed in keeping Gillian in the drawing-room, though not in pacifying her, till doors were heard again, and something so like Valetta crying as she went upstairs, that Gillian was neither to have nor to hold, and made a dash out of the room, only to find her aunt and the head-mistress exchanging last words in the hall, and as she was going to brush past them, Aunt Jane caught her hand, and said—

'Wait a moment, Gillian, I want to speak to you.'

There was no getting away, but she was very indignant. She tugged at her aunt's hand more than perhaps she knew, and there was something of a flouncing as she flung into the drawing-room and demanded—

'Well, what have you been doing to poor little Val?'

'We have done nothing,' said Miss Mohun quietly. 'Miss Leverett wanted to ask her some questions. Sit down, Gillian. You had better hear what I have to say before going to her. Well, it appears that there has been some amount of cribbing in the third form.'

'I'm sure Val never would,' broke out Gillian. And her aunt answered—

'So was I; but——'

'Oh——'

'My dear, *do* hush,' pleaded Adeline. 'You must let yourself listen.'

Gillian gave a desperate twist, but let her aunt smooth her hand.

'All the class—almost—seem to have done it in some telegraphic way, hard to understand,' proceeded Aunt Jane. 'There must have been some stupidity on the part of the class-mistress, Miss Mellon, or it could not have gone on; but there has of late been a strong suspicion of cribbing in Cæsar in Valetta's class. They had got rather behindhand, and have been working up somewhat too hard and fast to get through the portion for examination. Some of them translated *too well*—used terms for the idioms that were neither literal, nor could have been forged by their small brains, so there was an examination, and Georgie Purvis was detected reading off from the marks on the margin of her note-book.'

'But what has that to do with Val?'

'Georgie, being had up to Miss Leverett, made the sort of confession that implicates everybody.'

'Then why believe her?' muttered Gillian. But her aunt went on—

'She said that four or five of them did it, from the notes that Valetta Merrifield brought to school.'

'Never,' interjected Gillian.

'She said,' continued Miss Mohun, 'it was first that they saw her helping Maura White, and they thought that was not fair, and insisted on her doing the same for them.'

'It can't be true! Oh, don't believe it!' cried the sister.

'I grieve to remind you that I showed you in the drawer in the dining-room chiffonier a translation of that very book of Cæsar that your mother and I made years ago, when she was crazy upon Vercingetorix.'

'But was that reason enough for laying it upon poor Val?'

'She owned it.'

There was a silence, and then Gillian said—

'She must have been frightened, and not known what she was saying.'

'She was frightened, but she was very straightforward, and told without any shuffling. She saw the old copybooks when I was showing you those other remnants of our old times, and one day it seems she was in a great puzzle over her lessons, and could get no help or advice, because none of us had come in. I suppose you were with Lilian, and she thought she might just look at the passage. She found Maura in the same difficulty, and helped her; and then Georgie Purvis and Nelly Black found them out, and threatened to tell unless she showed them her notes; but the copying whole phrases was only done quite of late in the general over hurry.'

'She must have been bullied into it,' cried Gillian. 'I shall go and see about her.'

Aunt Ada made a gesture as of indeprecation; but Aunt Jane let her go without remonstrance, merely saying as the door closed—

'Poor child! *Esprit de famille!*'

'Will it not be very bad for Valetta to be petted and pitied?'

'I don't know. At any rate, we cannot separate them at night, so it is only beginning it a little sooner; and whatever I say only exasperates Gillian the more. Poor little Val, she had not a formed character enough to be turned loose into a High School without Mysie to keep her in order.'

'Or Gillian.'

'I am not so sure of Gillian. There's something amiss, though I can't make out whether it is merely that I rub her down the wrong way. I wonder whether this holiday time will do us good or harm! At any rate, I know how Lily felt about Dolores.'

'It must have been that class-mistress's fault.'

'To a great degree; but Miss Leverett has just discovered that her cleverness does not compensate for a general lack of sense and discipline. Poor little Val, perhaps it is her turning-point!'

Gillian, rushing up in a boiling state of indignation against everybody, felt the family shame most acutely of all; and though, as a Merrifield, she defended her sister belowstairs, on the other hand she was much more personally shocked and angered at the disgrace than were her aunts, and far less willing to perceive any excuse for the culprit.

There was certainly no petting or pitying in her tone as she stood over the little iron bed, where the victim was hiding her head on her pillow.

'Oh, Valetta, how could you do such a thing? The Merrifields have never been so disgraced before!'

'Oh, don't, Gill! Aunt Jane and Miss Leverett were—not so angry—when I said—I was sorry.'

'But what will papa and mamma say?'

'Must they—must they hear?'

'You would not think of deceiving them, I hope.'

'Not deceiving, only not telling.'

'That comes to much the same.'

'You can't say anything, Gill, for you are always down at Kal's office, and nobody knows.'

This gave Gillian a great shock, but she rallied, and said with dignity, 'Do you think I do not write to mamma everything I do?'

It sufficed for the immediate purpose of annihilating Valetta, who had just been begging off from letting mamma hear of her proceedings, but it left Gillian very uneasy as to how much the child might know or tell, and this made her proceed less violently, and more persuasively, 'Whatever I do, I write to mamma; and besides, it is different with a little thing like you, and your school work. Come, tell me how you got into this scrape.'

'Oh, Gill, it was so hard! All about those tiresome Gauls, and there were bits when the nominative case *would* go and hide itself, and those nasty tenses one doesn't know how to look out, and I knew I was making nonsense, and you were out of the way, and there was nobody to help; and I knew mamma's own book was there—the very part too—because Aunt Jane had shown it to us, so I did not think there was any harm in letting her help me out of the muddle.'

'Ah! that was the beginning.'

'If you had been in, I would not have done it. You know Aunt Jane said there was no harm in giving a clue, and this *was* mamma.'

'But that was not all.'

'Well, then, there was Maura first, as much puzzled, and her brother is so busy he hasn't as much time for her as he used to have, and it does signify to her, for perhaps if she does not pass, Mr. White may not let her go on at the High School, and that would be too dreadful, for you know you said I was to do all I could for Maura. So I marked down things for her, and she copied them off, and then Georgie and Nelly found it out, and, oh! they were dreadful! I never knew it was wrong till they went at me. And they were horrid to Maura, and said she was a Greek and I a Maltese, and so we were both false, and cheaty, and sly, and they should tell Miss Leverett unless I would help them.'

'Oh! Valetta, why didn't you tell me?'

'I never get to speak to you,' said Val. 'I did think I would that first time, and ask you what to do, but then you came in late, and when I began something, you said you had your Greek to do, and told me to hold my tongue.'

'I am very sorry,' said Gillian, feeling convicted of having neglected her little sister in the stress of her own work, and of the preparation for that of her pupil who was treading on her heels; 'but, indeed, Val, if you had told me it was important, I should have listened.'

'Ah! but when one is half-frightened, and you are always in a hurry,' sighed the child. 'And, indeed, I did do my best over my own work before ever I looked, only those two are so lazy and stupid, they would have ever so much more help than Maura or I ever wanted; and at last I was so worried and hurried with my French and all the rest, that I *did* scramble a whole lot down, and that was the way it was found out. And I am glad now it is over, whatever happens.'

'Yes, that is right,' said Gillian; 'and I am glad you told no stories; but I wonder Emma Norton did not see what was going on.'

'Oh, she is frightfully busy about her own.'

'And Kitty Varley?'

'Kitty is only going up for French and German. Miss Leverett is so angry. What do you think she will do to me, Gill? Expel me?'

'I don't know, I can't guess. I don't know High School ways.'

'It would be so dreadful for papa and mamma and the boys to know,' sobbed Valetta. 'And Mysie! oh, if Mysie was but here!'

'Mysie would have been a better sister to her,' said Gillian's conscience, and her voice said, 'You would never have done it if Mysie had been here.'

'And Mysie would be nice,' said the poor child, who longed after her companion sister as much for comfort as for conscience. 'Is Aunt Jane very very angry,' she went on; 'do you think I shall be punished?'

'I can't tell. If it were I, I should think you were punished enough by having disgraced the name of Merrifield by such a dishonourable action.'

'I—I didn't know it was dishonourable.'

'Well,' said Gillian, perhaps a little tired of the scene, or mayhap dreading another push into her own quarters, 'I have been saying what I could for you, and I should think they would feel that no one but our father and mother had a real right to punish you; but I can't tell what the School may do. Now, hush, it is of no use to talk any more. Good-night; I hope I shall find you asleep when I come to bed.'

Valetta would have detained her, but off she went, with a consciousness that she had been poor comfort to her little sister, and had not helped her to the right kind of repentance. But then that highest ground—the strict rule of perfect conscientious uprightness—was just what she shrank from bringing home to herself, in spite of those privileges of seniority by which she had impressed poor Valetta.

The worst thing further that was said that night, when she had reported as much of Valetta's confidence as she thought might soften displeasure, was Aunt Ada's observation: 'Maura! That's the White child, is it not? No doubt it was the Greek blood.'

'The English girls were much worse,' hastily said Gillian, with a flush of alarm, as she thought of her own friends being suspected.

'Yes; but it began with the little Greek,' said Aunt Ada. 'What a pity, for she is such an engaging child. I would take the child away from the High School, except that it would have the appearance of her being dismissed.'

'We must consider of that,' said Aunt Jane. 'There will hardly be time to hear from Lilias before the next term begins. Indeed, it will not be so very long to wait before the happy return, I hope.'

'Only two months,' said Gillian; 'but it would be happier but for this.'

'No,' said Aunt Jane. 'If we made poor little Val write her confession, and I do the same for not having looked after her better it will be off our minds, and need not cloud the meeting.'

'The disgrace!' sighed Gillian; 'the public disgrace.'

'My dear, I don't want to make you think lightly of such a thing. It was very wrong in a child brought up as you have all been, with a sense of honour and uprightness; but where there has been no such training, the attempt to copy is common enough for it is not to be looked on as an extraordinary and indelible disgrace. Do you remember Primrose saying she had broken mamma's heart, when she had knocked down a china vase? You need not be in that state of mind over what was a childish fault, made worse by those bullying girls. It is of no use to exaggerate. The sin is the thing—not the outward shame.'

'And Valetta told at once when asked,' added Aunt Ada. 'That makes a great difference.'

'In fact, she was relieved to have it out,' said Miss Mohun. 'It is not at all as if she were in the habit of doing things underhand.'

Everything struck on Gillian like a covert reproach. It was pain and shame to her that a Merrifield should have lowered herself to the common herd so as to need these excuses of her aunts, and then in the midst of that indignation came that throb of self-conviction which she was always confuting with the recollection of her letter to her mother. She was glad to bid good-night and rest her head.

The aunts ended by agreeing that it was needful to withdraw Valetta from the competition. It would seem like punishment to her, but it would remove her from the strain that certainly was not good for her. Indeed, they had serious thoughts of taking her from the school altogether, but the holidays would not long be ended before her parents return.

'I am sorry we ever let her try for the prize,' said Ada.

'Yes,' said Aunt Jane, 'I suppose it was weakness; but having opposed the acceptance of the system of prizes by competition at first, I thought it would look sullen if I refused to let Valetta try. Stimulus is all very well, but competition leads to emulation, wrath, strife, and a good deal besides.'

'Valetta wished it too, and she knew so much Latin to begin with, that I thought she would easily get it, and certainly she ought not to get into difficulties.'

'After the silken rein and easy amble of Silverfold, the spur and the race have come severely.'

'It is, I suppose, the same with Gillian, though there it is not competition. Do you expect her to succeed?'

'No. She has plenty of intelligence, and a certain sort of diligence, but does not work to a point. She wants a real hand over her! She will fail, and it will be very good for her.'

'I should say the work was overmuch for her, and had led her to neglect Valetta.'

'Work becomes overmuch when people don't know how to set about it, and resent being told—— No, not in words, but by looks and shoulders. Besides, I am not sure that it is her proper work that

oppresses her. I think she has some other undertaking in hand, probably for Christmas, or for her mother's return; but as secrecy is the very soul of such things, I shut my eyes.'

'Somehow, Jane, I think you have become so much afraid of giving way to curiosity that you sometimes shut your eyes rather too much.'

'Well, perhaps in one's old age one suffers from the reaction of one's bad qualities. I will think about it, Ada. I certainly never before realised how very different school supervision of young folks is from looking after them all round. Moreover, Gillian has been much more attentive to poor Lily Giles of late, in spite of her avocations.'

Valetta was not at first heart-broken on hearing that she was not to go in for the language examination. It was such a relief from the oppression of the task, and she had so long given up hopes of having the prize to show to her mother, that she was scarcely grieved, though Aunt Jane was very grave while walking down to school with her in the morning to see Miss Leverett, and explain the withdrawal.

That lady came to her private room as soon as she had opened the school. From one point of view, she said, she agreed with Miss Mohun that it would be better that her niece should not go up for the examination.

'But,' she said, 'it may be considered as a stigma upon her, since none of the others are to give up.'

'Indeed! I had almost thought it a matter of course.'

'On the contrary, two of the mothers seem to think nothing at all of the matter. Mrs. Black——'

'The Surveyor's wife, isn't she?'

'Yes; she writes a note saying that all children copy, if they can, and she wonders that I should be so severe upon such a frequent occurrence, which reflects more discredit on the governesses than the scholars.'

'Polite that! And Mrs. Purvis? At least, she is a lady!'

'She is more polite, but evidently has no desire to be troubled. She hopes that if her daughter has committed a breach of school discipline, I will act as I think best.'

'No feeling of the real evil in either! How about Maura White?'

'That is very different. It is her sister who writes, and so nicely that I must show it to you.'

'My dear Madam,—

'I am exceedingly grieved that Maura should have acted in a dishonourable manner, though she was not fully aware how wrongly she was behaving. We have been talking to her, and we think she is so truly sorry as not to be likely to fall into the same temptation again. As far as we can make out, she has generally taken pains with her tasks, and only obtained assistance in unusually difficult

passages, so that we think that she is really not ill-prepared. If it is thought right that all the pupils concerned should abstain from the competition, we would of course readily acquiese in the justice of the sentence; but to miss it this year might make so serious a difference to her prospects, that I hope it will not be thought a necessary act of discipline, though we know that we have no right to plead for any exemption for her. With many thanks for the consideration you have shown for her,

'I remain,

'Faithfully yours,

'K. WHITE.'

'A very different tone indeed, and it quite agrees with Valetta's account,' said Miss Mohun.

'Yes, the other two girls were by far the most guilty.'

'And morally, perhaps, Maura the least; but I retain my view that, irrespective of the others, Valetta's parents had rather she missed this examination, considering all things.'

Valetta came home much more grieved when she had found she was the only one left out, and declared it was unjust.

'No,' said Gillian, 'for you began it all. None of the others would have got into the scrape but for you.'

'It was all your fault for not minding me!'

'As if I made you do sly things.'

'You made me. You were so cross if I only asked a question,' and Val prepared to cry.

'I thought people had to do their own work and not other folks'! Don't be so foolish.'

'Oh dear! oh dear! how unkind you are. I wish—I wish Mysie was here; every one is grown cross! Oh! if mamma would but come home!'

'Now, Val, don't be such a baby! Stop that!'

And Valetta went into one of her old agonies of crying and sobbing, which brought Aunt Jane in to see what was the matter. She instantly stopped the scolding with which Gillian was trying to check the outburst, and which only added to its violence.

'It is the only thing to stop those fits,' said Gillian. 'She can if she will! It is all temper.'

'Leave her to me!' commanded Aunt Jane. 'Go!'

Gillian went away, muttering that it was not the way mamma or Nurse Halfpenny treated Val, and quite amazed that Aunt Jane, of all people, should have the naughty child on her lap and in her arms, soothing her tenderly.

The cries died away, and the long heaving sobs began to subside, and at last a broken voice said, on Aunt Jane's shoulder, 'It's—a—little bit—like mamma.'

For Aunt Jane's voice had a ring in it like mamma's, and this little bit of tenderness was inexpressibly comforting.

'My poor dear child,' she said, 'mamma will soon come home, and then you will be all right.'

'I shouldn't have done it if mamma had been there!'

'No; and now you are sorry.'

'Will mamma be very angry?'

'She will be grieved that you could not hold out when you were tempted; but I am sure she will forgive you if you write it all to her. And, Val, you know you can have God's forgiveness at once if you tell Him.'

'Yes,' said Valetta, gravely; then, 'I did not before, because I thought every one made so much of it, and were so cross. And Georgie and Nellie don't care at all.'

'Nor Maura?'

'Oh, Maura does, because of Kalliope.'

'How do you mean?'

Valetta sat up on her aunt's lap, and told.

'Maura told me! She said Kally and Alec both were at her, but her mamma was vexed with them, and said she would not have her scolded at home as well as at school about nothing; and she told Theodore to go and buy her a tart to make up to her, but Theodore wouldn't, for he said he was ashamed of her. So she sent the maid. But when Maura had gone to bed and to sleep, she woke up, and there was Kally crying over her prayers, and whispering half-aloud, "Is she going too? My poor child! Oh, save her. Give her the Spirit of truth——"'

'Poor Kalliope! She is a good sister.'

'Yes, Maura says Kally is awfully afraid of their telling stories because of Richard—the eldest, you know. He does it dreadfully. I remember nurse used to tell us not to fib like Dick White. Maura said he used to tell his father stories about being late and getting money, and their mother never let him be punished. He was her pet. And Maura remembers being carried in to see poor Captain White just before he died, when she was getting better, but could not stand, and he said, "Truth before all, children. Be true to God and man." Captain White did care so much, but Mrs. White doesn't. Isn't that very odd, for she isn't a Roman Catholic?' ended Valetta, obviously believing that falsehood was inherent in Romanists, and pouring out all this as soon as her tears were assuaged, as if, having heard it, she must tell.

'Mrs. White is half a Greek, you know,' said Aunt Jane, 'and the Greeks are said not to think enough about truth.'

'Epaminondas did,' said Valetta, who had picked up a good deal from the home atmosphere, 'but Ulysses didn't.'

'No; and the Greeks have been enslaved and oppressed for a great many years, and that is apt to make people get cowardly and false. But that is not our concern, Val, and I think with such a recollection of her good father, and such a sister to help her, Maura will not fall

into the fault again. And, my dear, I quite see that neither you nor she entirely realised that what you did was deception, though you never spoke a word of untruth.'

'No, we did not,' said Valetta.

'And so, my dear child, I do forgive you, quite and entirely, as we used to say, though I have settled with Miss Leverett that you had better not go up for the examination, since you cannot be properly up to it. And you must write the whole history to your mother. Yes; I know it will be very sad work, but it will be much better to have it out and done with, instead of having it on your mind when she comes home.'

'Shall you tell her?'

'Yes, certainly,' said the aunt, well knowing that this would clench the matter. 'But I shall tell her how sorry you are, and that I really think you did not quite understand what you were about at first. And I shall write to Miss White, and try to comfort her about her sister.'

'You won't say I told?'

'Oh, no; but I shall have quite reason enough for writing in telling her that I am sorry my little niece led her sister into crooked paths.'

Gillian knew that this letter was written and sent, and it did not make her more eager for a meeting with Kalliope. So that she was not sorry that the weather was a valid hindrance, though a few weeks ago she would have disregarded such considerations. Besides, there was her own examination, which for two days was like a fever, and kept her at her little table, thinking of nothing but those questions, and dreaming and waking over them at night.

It was over; and she was counselled on all sides to think no more about it till she should hear of success or failure. But this was easier said than done, and she was left in her tired state with a general sense of being on a wrong tack, and of going on amiss, whether due to her aunt's want of assimilation to herself, or to her mother's absence, she did not know, and with the further sense that she had not been the motherly sister she had figured to herself; but that both the children should show a greater trust and reliance on Aunt Jane than on herself, grieved her, not exactly with jealousy, but with sense of failure and dissatisfaction with herself. She had a universal distaste to her surroundings, and something very like dread of the Whites, and she rejoiced in the prospect of quitting Rockstone for the present.

She felt bound to run down to the office to wish Kalliope good-bye. There she found an accumulation of exercises and translations waiting for her.

'Oh! what a quantity! It shows how long it is since I have been here.'

'And, indeed,' began Kalliope, 'since your aunt has been so very kind about poor little Maura——'

'Oh! please don't talk to me. There's such a lot to do, and I have no time. Wait till I have done.'

And she nervously began reading out the Greek exercise, so as effectually to stop Kalliope's mouth. Moreover, either her own uneasy mind, or the difficulty of the Greek, brought her into a dilemma. She saw that Alexis's phrase was wrong, but she did not clearly perceive what the sentence ought to be, and she perplexed herself over it till he came in, whether to her satisfaction or not she could not have told, for she had not wanted to see him on the one hand, though on the other it silenced Kalliope.

She tried to clear her perceptions by explanations to him, but he did not seem to give his mind to the grammar half as much as to the cessation of the lessons and her absence.

'You must do the best you can,' she said, 'and I shall find you gone quite beyond me.'

'I shall never do that, Miss Merrifield.'

'Nonsense,' she said, laughing uncomfortably; 'a pretty clergyman you would be if you could not pass a girl. There! good-bye. Make a list of your puzzles and I will do my best with them when I come back.'

'Thank you,' and he wrung her hand with an earnestness that gave her a sense of uneasiness.

(To be continued.)

DAGMAR.

BY HELEN SHIPTON, AUTHOR OF 'CAIRNFROTH,' ETC.

CHAPTER IV.

THE PICTURE OF A GHOST.

'Then said the Rabbi Ponim, "Art thou not he
Whom I buried yesterday?" And he was answered,
"Yea! I am he!"'

When Maurice came down the next morning he had apparently forgotten the bell-ringing and his annoyance thereat. He took his place in the household in an easy friendly way that was really attractive, and all the more so because it was evident that it was only the kindness that he met with that was helping him to get over his shyness. Mr. Tyndal called him Maurice from the first, and after having checked himself two or three times and apologised, finally dropped 'Mr. Claughton' altogether, and left off apologising. Maurice having assured him, with evident sincerity, that he much preferred being addressed by his Christian name.

Naturally everybody who spoke to him was—however they might disguise the fact—trying to 'pump' him, to find out his real thoughts and opinions on all points. And he did not seem to be at all reserved; but answered freely every question put to him. Nay, by the impulsive way in which he checked himself every now and then, one might guess that five-and-twenty years' experience of the world was only just beginning to teach him a reasonable amount of reserve and caution.

This openness and almost boyish simplicity was oddly contrasted with his wide acquaintance with the world and its ways. His handsome impressive face and bright hawk eyes seemed to have stood him in good stead, and caused the world in general to behave pretty well to him; and though he could use the stereotyped expressions of distrust of one's fellow men, it was rather as bits of wisdom from without than as the results of his own reflection and experience.

Nothing could be more at variance than his apparent temperament and Raymond's, and the two had a good deal of time that morning in which to compare impressions; for the Squire had an imperative engagement until luncheon time, and Maurice Claughton altogether

declined to make acquaintance with his own domain without the moral support of the party from the Hall.

So he and Raymond were told off to amuse each other, according to the prevalent but fallacious belief that where there are two young men staying in a house they must find each other's society congenial.

It was a lovely morning, one of those super-excellent mornings in late September which make one believe in the perfectibility of the species. The two young men walked about the garden together, first smoking a cigar, then doing absolutely nothing; not finding very much to say to one another, but keeping up as much conversation as politeness demanded.

To his surprise, Raymond found his companion quite as accomplished in the matter of small talk as himself. Indeed, he even saw reason to suspect him of having attained to that perfection of the art which enables a man to go on talking coherently and even gracefully while he is thinking of something totally different.

'He is not shy of me,' thought Raymond to himself. 'But why should he have been so desperately shy last night? The position was a little embarrassing certainly, but he must have faced more alarming coteries in his wanderings round the world.'

'Listen!' he said suddenly aloud. 'What is that?' They had come to the bottom of the garden, near the walk that led into the plantation, and a green wilderness of trees and shrubs prevented their seeing a yard before them, except along the path by which they had come.

'Some one singing,' said Maurice softly.

'It is Day—and in a virtuous mood. She is singing a hymn, I declare.'

'A hymn?' said the other, inquiringly, as if his experience had not lain in that direction.

Raymond held up his finger and made a step or two forward. The soft clear notes came to them more distinctly, in a sweet drawling cadence, the kind of tune that has no precise end or beginning.

'Thy gardens and thy gallant walks
Continually are green,
There grow such sweet and pleasant flowers
As nowhere else are seen.'

Raymond turned the corner of a great rhododendron, and Maurice followed him. Then they both stopped short and looked. There was a little open glade in the shrubbery, and on either side of it two tall beech-trees. Fastened to these, high up, was a pole, and from the pole there hung a swing, and in the swing sat Dagmar, one slender hand curved lightly round one of the ropes, her slim ankles crossed, and one foot just touching at intervals the hardened mossy earth, keeping up the even motion whereby she floated to and fro in chequered sunlight and shadow.

Her hat was in her lap, and the light wind of her coming and going

fluttered the little loose rings of her hair, while her eyes were fixed upon the far-away patches of blue between the beech leaves.

In a moment she saw the young men, and turned her head with a smile, letting the swing become almost still.

'You here?' she said. 'My father said you were gone out for a walk, to explore the country.'

'We were too wise,' said Raymond. 'And where have you been? I have not seen you since you set off with Dick. Did he require to be coached on the way in his Latin grammar?'

'If he had he might have requested the honour of *your* company. No, I only went as far as the village. Since then I have been writing notes for mamma. Mr. Claughton, are you very courageous?'

'Not particularly,' said Maurice, leaning against the tree which had not been already appropriated by Raymond. 'What test of my courage have you been preparing?'

'A very severe one. But you will not know *how* severe beforehand, because I don't think, in all your travels, you can have encountered anything so awful as a county dinner-party. Papa intends to ask *all* our neighbours to make your acquaintance, and to celebrate your return.'

'That is very good of him,' said Maurice; 'and judging by what I have seen of this county, it can be only a pleasure to know the people who inhabit it.'

'That is very well,' said Dagmar, looking at him with a kind of mocking approval. 'That is a right and hopeful spirit in which to begin. But have you considered that all these people are exactly alike? and that you will have learnt just enough about them beforehand to confuse you utterly? You will be introduced to half a dozen grey-haired, fresh-coloured middle-aged gentlemen, and when you should begin a conversation with one of them, you will be vainly endeavouring to remember whether he is the Conservative ex-Member or the Radical Member whom his enemies accuse of having got his seat by bribery.'

Maurice laughed, and Raymond likewise.

'By the way, Day?' said the latter, 'how was it that you let a Radical get in this time? Did he really bribe?'

'I don't know. It seems to me that they all bribe, always; and perhaps he was not really worse than the rest. But the people about here have a great love of fair play. When the Conservatives have been in a little while, they think it is only right that the Liberals should have a chance to show what *they* can do. So Mr. Pointer is having *his* innings now, vice Mr. Conybeare bowled out.'

She looked so saucy and sweet, rocking gently back and forward, with the sunshine on her bright face and brown hair, that both young men felt a conviction that her view of the case must be the right one.

'I am not very well up in English politics,' said Maurice gravely. 'I must study these little matters. Which side do you take, Miss Tyndal?'

'I? Neither—or both. Practically, perhaps, I am a Conservative and for the most conservative of reasons—because my father is one. I was down in the village on the day of the election, talking to an old woman. And she said to me, "Ay, don't you hope the Liberals 'll get in?" "Well, I don't know that I do," I said. "Do you?" And she said, "Yes! you see trade's been so bad!" "But," I said, "do you think that the Liberals will improve the trade?" And she looked at me out of one eye, and said, "Ay, I don't know; there's a many on 'em *in* trade!"'

She gave the old woman's speeches with the most complete mimicry of their broad vernacular.

Maurice looked a little puzzled, and Raymond smiled.

'As good a reason as I ever heard given, for preferring either party!' he said. 'You don't mean to say that that is the luncheon bell?'

'I do indeed,' answered Day, slipping from her swaying seat; 'and I am not above confessing that I am glad of it.'

'I know!' said Raymond, as they went together up the shady path towards the house. 'Ladies always own to being hungry at half-past one, though never at any other time.'

'I am always hungry,' said Dagmar simply. 'I think it must be because I run about out-of-doors so much. Mother says it is because I am growing; but I think I must surely have done growing now.'

A clear whistle—two peculiar notes joined with a flourish—was heard through the trees; and Dagmar, as if instinctively, raised her head, and answered the call by one just like it.

'Dick is in good time to-day,' she remarked, quite unconscious of the impropriety of such conduct; and even as she spoke the boy's slim figure came flying down the path to meet them. He had something to say apparently to his sister-playmate, and the two went on into the house together, quite regardless of the two young men.

Raymond declined to make one of the party who were to go up to the Court after luncheon. Perhaps this young man, who was never likely to possess anything more in the shape of a home than 'chambers' in town, did not care to accompany the fortunate young owner of the Court over his ancestral domain. He could not tell that to Maurice the place seemed less his own property than that of the ghosts whom he feared to encounter.

Dick also had some private ends of his own to serve, so the party who were to help Maurice to face the ghosts consisted only of the three ladies and the Squire.

They walked up through the park together, and now the Squire felt that he might be justified in talking of business. He gave his tongue and his imagination the rein, therefore, and never noticed, as he proceeded with advice, suggestion, and instruction, that his companion was growing more and more silent and distrait, and when he did answer evidently did so at random.

Presently one of the Squire's most perspicuous sentences was in-

terrupted by a half-smothered exclamation from his companion, in what he only recognised as 'a foreign language.'

'Ay?' said Mr. Tyndal, stopping short. Then seeing where the young man's eyes were directed—'Yes, that's the Court. Should you have recollected it?'

'Not in the least,' said Maurice, speaking very low, and staring fixedly up at the great white stately mansion.

'No? Well, you have seen many places since you saw this. Had your mother no picture of the place?'

'No,' said Maurice shortly. And the Squire suddenly remembered that possibly the recollection of his mother might still be a tender subject.

They passed on into the house, and the young master endured the cheerful greeting and congratulations of the housekeeper with something of the same uneasy shyness which he had manifested *à propos* of the bell-ringing.

But he was courteous in a graceful distant sort of way, and the Squire took upon himself to dismiss the woman, and they proceeded to make the tour of the house, with comments and suggestions upon every room.

Perhaps Maurice thought that these cheerful and commonplace suggestions were as likely as anything to give the ghosts that legal notice to quit of which Dagmar had spoken, for he showed no impatience to view his house as a whole. He stood by Dagmar and her mother, listening while Mr. Tyndal talked on, and gradually coming out of his silent mood, and smiling and making his own comments with the air of one not very specially concerned in the matter.

The business was not likely to be soon over, but Dagmar was not soon weary of it, whatever the others might be. She was a student of human nature in her own peculiar way, and the present circumstances were novel and interesting. She liked to notice how the young man occasionally lost himself in wonder at his present position, how hard he found it to realise that all this unfamiliar property was really his own, that he who had been in so many places the 'guest who tarrieth but a day,' was really a fixture here for life, if he chose to have it so.

Now and then his sense of ownership became sufficiently strong to make him give an opinion; but on the whole he seemed to find it hard to remember that it was really more his business than any one else's. It also became apparent that his notions of comfort were far less rigid than those of the Squire. He did not seem especially anxious to save money; but he hardly saw the necessity of many of Mr. Tyndal's sweeping plans of repair.

'Really, you know,' he said at last, 'I have seen, and lived in, so many houses in a far worse state than this that I cannot be as much shocked at the condition of this as you seem to expect.'

'Then I am afraid you think that I brought you home upon false pretences,' said the Squire, smiling.

'No,' answered the young man, meeting the smile with a full grave glance. 'It was time I came—home.'

'Besides, you don't know our pleasing English climate as yet. Wait till you find the wet coming in all over the roof, and damp creeping up all the walls, and then——'

What was to happen then, he did not say. For they were entering the large drawing-room as he spoke, and at that instant Maurice interrupted him by a low-toned exclamation of surprise, it might almost have been of fear.

He turned sharply from the rest of the party and strode up the long room, coming to a standstill before the empty fireplace and looking up at the portrait which gazed down upon them from above the mantelshelf. The Squire followed wondering, and the young man turned upon him a face pale to the lips.

'But who?——' he said, speaking very rapidly. 'What is it? Where did it come from? He never lived to be this age—he was dead and buried before this picture could have been taken.'

The Squire looked not a little startled. He turned appealing to his wife, who had drawn near with the rest.

'I think you mistake,' she said in her soft tones. 'Though your father died so soon after his marriage he was no longer a very young man. He was more than five-and-thirty when he married, and this picture was taken several years before his death.'

Maurice sat down upon one of the draped and shrouded chairs, and crossed his arms upon the back of it, still looking up at the picture.

'Y—yes!—I must have made a mistake,' he said after a moment, carefully steadying his voice. 'I did not know that that picture was here. It—startled me.'

He seemed to be calming himself by a deliberate effort; he withdrew his eyes slowly from those pictured ones which seemed to fascinate them. In a moment he rose and made a careless inspection of the apartment, looking here and there where Mr. Tyndal or his wife called his attention. But all the while, it seemed to Dagmar, he was keeping his eyes by an effort from that picture, and just at the last, as they left the room, he turned upon the threshold and looked at it again, with a steady look that might have been defiant if it had not been so sad.

The tour of the house was finished at last, and they walked home more silently than they had come. Arrived at the Hall, the others passed on in, and Dagmar and Maurice were left alone for an instant in the porch.

'You were right,' he said, in an abrupt confidential tone, 'you were right and I was wrong. I saw one ghost to-day, and I was far more disturbed by it than by all the ghosts whose presence I only suspected.'

Dagmar was puzzled. She looked up at him with a question in her clear grave eyes, but for once she was shy of putting it into words.

Maurice half laughed.

'You will say it was only a picture of a ghost, after all,' he said. 'So much the better for me, since I can perhaps banish it without calling in the aid of your parish priest with bell, book, and candle. But a picture of a ghost is enough, I will not desire to see any more!'

(To be continued.)

A PLUNGE INTO TROUBLED WATERS.

BY MISS C. R. COLERIDGE.

Matter of course, matter of choice.

CHAPTER VIII.

BRINGING CLASSES TOGETHER.

TOWARDS the end of the Christmas holidays, Violet Almond informed Alice that 'Mamma had been asked to take a lodger, the new assistant mistress,' and, in a day or two, that her name was Miss Morris, and that she seemed quite lady-like and was very good-looking.

On the ensuing Monday, Susan Woodford ran home, saying that they had a real nice teacher come; who'd been quite pleased because she could say her Catechism; and soon, a tall fair-haired girl in quiet and tasteful dress was seen walking along Laura Terrace. But she was busy, and taken up with her new work, and nothing was seen of her till Sunday morning, when she walked into the Sunday-school escorted by Mr. Anson, who informed the school that Miss Walters had gone away for three weeks, and that Miss Morris had kindly taken her place. He then informed Miss Morris, also aloud, that he was afraid she would find the scholars very troublesome and unruly; but she would no doubt make allowance for their high spirits—children would be children, as no doubt she knew.

'I will do my best with them, sir. I think I shall be able to manage—they are beginning to know me in the day-school, sir, now,' replied Miss Morris, with much deference of manner; but with a dignity that made little Mr. Anson look rather shy. Like many young clergymen, Mr. Anson never quite knew how to behave to the day-school teachers; whereas Miss Morris knew quite well how to behave to him.

'Is it usual for you to read prayers yourself, sir?' she said.

'Well, no—not usual; but perhaps this first morning it may be as well—for the discipline of the school.'

Miss Morris had every one standing up and waiting in a wonderfully short time. She looked round afterwards, and brought chairs to the teachers, asking politely about the times and customs of the school; and when she sat down to take the first class, and began to teach, Alice Woodford woke from her long dream of inattention and once more thought of the lesson instead of herself. She had been too well taught not to know that this was good teaching. Besides,

Miss Morris expected the knowledge which Miss Alice had imparted. They got to church without half the usual amount of bustle, and the first Sunday of Miss Walters' absence was marked by no scholastic events at all.

Miss Morris was the daughter of a schoolmistress, and had advantages of training which, always exceptional, are perhaps more so now than ever. Her mind had been cultivated, her manners watched, and she was a girl of unusual talent, and of much originality and refinement. She was the very best possible specimen of the old-fashioned training given in Church of England schools, helped in every possible way by the clergyman and his family, accustomed to the happiest and most cordial relations with them, and prepared to spread good manners, good morals, and good doctrine among her pupils; while she made her mark as a brilliant and successful schoolmistress as well.

Perhaps it was a sign of changing times, that she did not feel that to be her mother's helper in the old school at home offered her sphere enough. She wanted to pursue her profession to the utmost, to use her talents to their full extent; but she was very young and very pretty, and her mother and her friends insisted on a year as assistant mistress at Dulworth before she tried her hand at a London school, and started on her own resources.

She had read newspapers, heard other pupil-teachers talk at college, and she knew that all the world was not like the Flaxby where she had been bred. She learnt to tolerate and even to approve some things that her friends there would have thought doubtful. The enthusiastic child grew firm and self-reliant; but she was thoroughly loyal-hearted, and altogether Dulworth was in luck.

She soon made acquaintance with the Woodfords, and heard the story of Alice's misfortunes from Violet Almond, and in Mrs. Woodford she at once recognised a congenial spirit. She belonged to quite another generation; but she was the child of the same system, and they were soon ready to make friends—Lily and she became acquainted. Young Mr. Cummings informed them that Miss Morris was very superior, and—Mr. Bailey discovered that Miss Morris could sing unusually well, and was equal, at least, to criticise his recitations.

One Saturday afternoon, about three weeks or so after her arrival, as Mrs. Woodford was sitting mending and meditating by herself, Miss Morris appeared, with her big grey eyes looking at once eager and serious, and her mind evidently full of something new.

After very friendly greetings, Mrs. Woodford asked—

'And how do you get on, Miss Morris, with the Sunday-school? My girls will be sorry when you give it up.'

'Oh, I get on very well, Mrs. Woodford; the children are not really hard to manage. I almost think I shall ask if I may take a class there. For though they always told us at college to keep clear of Sunday work—I'm very strong—and I have no pupil-teachers to

teach at present. I wish I had the monitors, they're often neglected, and then afterwards it's double trouble.'

'It don't seem right to me that the day and Sunday-school should be so separate,' said Mrs. Woodford; 'we never thought of such a thing at Roseberry.'

'Ah, but that was a little place in the country. Now at Flaxby we always kept up going on Sunday; but then Miss Ward made it so pleasant for us, and they always took care to show that they knew it was a matter of choice.'

'Nothing seems connected here,' said Mrs. Woodford, ''tis just a chance where the children go; there's no feeling in it.'

'I suppose,' said Miss Morris, with a frown of eagerness on her pretty face, 'that good, clever people can make a feeling anywhere. And I don't believe we were narrow-minded at Flaxby. It seems odd to see so little of the clergy and the ladies in a Church school.'

'I never could like to send my children to a Board,' said Mrs. Woodford.

'But they must go, in many places. It's very hard to tell; but if I worked under a Board, I should find plenty to do for the children. You see, if we all hold back, they must be left to people who have no real care for religion. And that's about the worst of it. They might be taught perhaps at other times; but it's what we are that makes the difference to them.'

'Very true, Miss Morris. The world gives one a deal to think of in these days.'

'Oh yes—there's nothing so interesting as thinking,' said the young schoolmistress naively; 'and that reminds me, Mrs. Woodford, have you heard about the new entertainments?'

'Temperance ones, are they? I'm sure, Miss Morris, my children go out more evenings here than ever our young ladies thought of at Roseberry.'

'It's not temperance—exactly—nor for children. Mr. Lake, one of the St. Augustine's curates—and young Mr. Warren, the son of Miss Woodford's employer, you know, and others are getting them up. They are to be very superior and for the whole town, and all classes are to help. The great point is to bring out every one's talents. There is to be music and recitations chiefly, and a little acting if they can manage it. Mr. Bailey is to help a great deal, and the Choral Society, and Lady Gwendolen Vincent and other ladies have promised to sing. And I have been asked to help—at least with the singing. I suppose the Rector couldn't make any objection—indeed, Mr. Anson himself asked me.'

'My dear,' said Mrs. Woodford, 'excuse me; but won't it take off a great deal of your attention from your school?'

'I wouldn't allow it to do that; I think I could do something without giving too much time to it.'

Mrs. Woodford looked at the very striking face and figure of the girl before him, and knowing that her singing was good enough to be remarkable, wondered whether the assistant schoolmistress ought to be talked of all over the town.

'I dare say you would make a good many acquaintances over the preparing.'

'One can't live without acquaintances,' said Miss Morris reflectively. 'Do you think I ought not to join, Mrs. Woodford?' she added.

'My dear, I don't know. No doubt you know much better than I do, and would always conduct yourself right, but in your position you can't be too prudent. But things are thought becoming now which in old days we should have been blamed for. It almost seems as if we might come to Mr. Bailey's dances.'

'Miss Gertrude Ward, my old teacher, has often talked to me about such things. She says she believes that sometimes we must try experiments. She is such a friend to me, and we write to each other.'

'Miss Goodall used to say that self-denial was always the safest,' said Mrs. Woodford; 'but there, my dear Miss Morris, if Mr. Anson asks you to be of use, I don't see how you can say no.'

It need hardly be said that Daisy Morris did join the 'Association for Popular Entertainment.' She was a very industrious and vigorous girl; her school-work was quite within her powers, and she had time, energy, and interest to spare.

But three 'Popular Entertainments' had not been given before the Rector observed to his curate—

'You asked Miss Morris to join, did you? Was that perfectly prudent?'

'Well, sir,' said the curate, 'I never thought her singing would be so remarkable, or that she could recite; and it hadn't occurred to me that she was particularly handsome.'

'Hadn't it?' said the Rector dryly. 'I quite agree with you that if she had been plain, and an inferior performer, the situation would be simpler.'

'I'm afraid some of the ladies don't like it,' said Mr. Anson; 'but Lake thinks that the union of classes for such an object is so desirable. But I'll keep an eye on her, sir. I am always at the meetings, and could say a word if I saw reason.'

'I should advise caution in that respect,' said Mr. Randall.

Miss Morris had a contralto voice, powerful, and more or less cultivated. She sang much more conspicuously than most young ladies, and better than many. When she stood up in her plain black dress, her fair hair, and fine outline, and the strong notes of her voice made every one ask who she was; and once when a reciter failed, and Miss Morris was asked if she could take her place, Miss Morris suddenly thought that she could, and recited 'The Swan's

Nest,' certainly not perfectly, but with the care and refinement of one taught by a lady, and the composure of one accustomed to face formidable inspectors. Moreover, whatever Miss Morris did, there was a certain force which told, and she was clapped and encored and made a great success.

'The movement,' as its promoters called it, originated with a certain Mr. Lake, a very clever and enthusiastic curate attached to St. Augustine's Church. Mr. Lake did not see why he should have no human sympathies with his flock. If he could show himself one of them, they would be far more amenable to his teaching. Moreover, the softening influences of the arts must be tried on the lower orders, and all the pleasures connected with them brought into their lives. Coming across Alfred Bailey, he met a helper ready to hand, and as young Mr. Warren, the son of the great tradesman where Lily was employed, was rather stage-struck, and also anxious to make acquaintances and get into society, he made an eager third; they enlisted various benevolent and accomplished ladies, others of the clergy, and all the helpers they could find.

They put forward a very nice little paper, saying they wished to amuse their neighbours, and improve themselves at the same time, and begging indulgence to the efforts of beginners. Very pleasant evenings were produced, and classes were very much brought together indeed. The only thing was that it had not occurred to the promoters of the movement that any consequences, except mutual understanding, would result from their being so brought.

How charming it was for Lady Gwendolen Vincent and Miss Morris to sing a duet; how kindly the lady complimented the young schoolmistress, and how perfectly well-mannered the latter showed herself. But after Mr. Anson had delightedly repeated the great lady's favourable opinion to several members of his congregation, he was surprised to find himself not quite so cordially received as usual.

That young Mr. Warren should show the most gentlemanly courtesy to the young ladies in his father's house of business was delightful in these days when labour and capital stand so much aloof from each other. That one of those young ladies should take special pains with her toilet on such occasions was not unnatural. Mr. Lake wrote an article called 'Pleasure, the Handmaid of the Church,' with which he thought he would 'try the *Nineteenth Century*;' and the fourth Tuesday passed off with a larger and more enthusiastic audience than ever. Some score of people were furnished with something pleasant and more or less elevated to do, and several hundreds with something besides their daily routine to talk of.

CHAPTER IX.

TAKING COUNSEL.

DAISY MORRIS possessed that youthful vigour of mind which can easily pass from one subject to another, and had moreover been trained in habits of active attention. She taught her class none the worse on the Wednesday morning for the plaudits that rang in her ears on the Tuesday night—possibly better—from the sense of full life and vitality which her many interests imparted to her. She felt prosperous and cheerful as she remained behind at twelve o'clock to look after Susie Woodford and others kept in for inattention.

As soon, however, as the schools were dismissed, she became aware of lugubrious sounds proceeding from the adjoining class-room, 'The Dead March in Saul,' played slowly and with corrections, on a harmonium—such as school harmoniums too frequently are. Miss Morris had to go into the class-room to put away some books, and as she did so, she beheld Mr. Cummings sitting alone diligently practising.

'Good-morning, Miss Morris,' he said, pausing. 'I hope I don't intrude. Mrs. Trapp begged me to practise here in the dinner-time.'

'Not at all,' said Daisy. 'But, dear me, Mr. Cummings, can't you play something more cheerful than the Dead March?'

'It is very handy to have the Dead March ready, in case of accidents, Miss Morris.'

'Dear me, I hope we shan't be needing it. Is it the Queen, or the Bishop, or the Rector that you expect to want it for, Mr. Cummings?'

'There's no saying what may happen,' said Mr. Cummings.

'Couldn't you learn the Wedding March as well, for a change?' said Miss Morris, laughing.

'No, Miss Morris, it would not be at all consonant with my feelings at present. It's not a piece of music with which I ever expect to be connected at all.'

Miss Morris here heard the monitor's footstep in the school beyond, and became aware that she was committing a breach of school propriety, to which singing on a public platform afforded no parallel, so she retired to her own quarters, merely observing as she retreated—

'It would be a more cheerful sort of accident than the other, I think.'

Daisy was blessed by nature with a sense of the ludicrous, and whether for good or evil, her cultivation of mind had given her a standard by which to judge her companions. She was quite aware of the absurdity of Mr. Cummings' solemnity, and she laughed to herself over the lessons, as she thought of keeping the Dead March 'handy,' and could not resist telling the story to Lily Woodford, whom she happened to meet coming home from work that evening.

'Oh,' said Lily, tossing her head and giggling, 'isn't he down-

right absurd. It's the "Populars" that puts him out so. No one will ask him to play the Dead March there.'

'But I thought he belonged to the Choral Society, so he would join in the glees, wouldn't he?'

'He says he never will any more,' said Lily, with rather a flippant little laugh.

'Why not?' inquired Daisy.

'Oh,' said Lily, 'he thinks it's too frivolous, and bad for us girls. But for my part, I don't see that there's any harm if people are polite to one, and if one gets to see a difference between people, why there's no help for it.'

'No,' said Daisy thoughtfully. 'It's by seeing a difference that one learns to improve oneself.'

'Yes,' said Lily, with an odd look. 'I suppose, Miss Morris, you'd feel yourself too advanced for our Bible-class at St. Augustine's; but it's very select, and no one in service admitted.'

'Aren't there?' said Daisy. 'Do you think that a Bible-class ought to be exclusive any more than a service in church? We liked to get the most ignorant to our meetings at Flaxby.'

'Well,' said Lily, 'one must keep oneself up, you know, or people don't think anything of us.'

'But if Lady Gwendolen and some of the other ladies thought so too, how could we have the Popular Entertainments?' said Daisy.

'Oh, it's different for them,' said Lily; 'and besides, they do think so. I heard *that* Miss Walters talking about "that young person's singing," meaning you. She might have said "young lady."'

'People of different classes use words in a different sense,' said Daisy, though she coloured up.

'You seem to know a great deal of about people's ways,' said Lily, curiously.

'One of my fellow pupil-teachers belonged to people who had been in a very superior station,' said Daisy. 'I found out a great deal from her.'

'Was she stuck up?' said Lily.

'No; but she had very different notions on some things from the rest of us, though my mother was very careful of me.'

'Do you think there's a such deal of difference, really?' said Lily, rather eagerly.

'Why, you seem to think so—the other way—at your Bible-class,' said Miss Morris, an answer which made Lily open her eyes wide in astonishment.

On the ensuing Sunday afternoon Daisy went for a walk by herself. She did not mean to be 'stuck up,' but she did not feel very ready to make intimacies with her fellow-mistresses, who happened to be of the less superior type, and from other colleges. She had very high spirits, and there were times when the girlish sense of comradeship overpowered everything else; but she did 'know the difference,' and half hoped to find a friend of another sort.

She turned away from the town and up a pretty countrified road, towards a neighbouring village. As she walked along it she distinctly saw ahead of her Lily Woodford, in her fur-trimmed Sunday jacket, and hat with orange plume, and with her a gentleman, whom she recognised as young Mr. Warren.

Daisy looked for a moment, then turned round and walked homewards; for what could she do if she met them coming back? In a moment the meaning of Lily's hints flashed across her, and she knew perfectly well that under no circumstances ought the girl to have been walking with her employer's son. This was one thing that had come of the 'union of classes.' But, of course, it was Lily's own fault; if a girl did not know how to respect herself, she was safe nowhere. Daisy had some of the modern intellectual young-lady notion, that falling in love was silly and an interruption to one's studies. She was much less sympathetic than most girls would have been. And she was annoyed and angry. It seemed to justify objections. Surely it would be too hard to give up so much pleasure and improvement for many people because a silly girl ran an additional risk. She did not know Lily well enough to interfere; but she was much ruffled and upset. Life on your own responsibility *was* puzzling; but at any rate she herself knew how to behave. She would watch on Tuesday. and perhaps contrive to let Lily know that she was noticed, Presently as she came towards Laura Terrace she came upon another pair, Alice Woodford and Charlotte Benson. Alice blushed and started as if she felt guilty, while the other girl gave a composed and gentle greeting, and saying—

'I must go in to grandmother. Now, Alice, good-bye;' and she turned in at a garden-gate, and left Alice with Miss Morris.

'Not at school, Alice?'

'No, Miss Morris. Miss Morris, I think Dulworth is a very difficult place to live in.'

'Do you?' said Daisy, startled at the echo of her own thoughts. 'Why?'

'I've not been a happy girl since I came here,' said Alice; 'and I don't think one can be good with strange people.'

'What is the matter? Can you tell me anything about it?'

'Miss Morris, at home dear Miss Alice taught me, and I went to school. I was quite her favourite, and an example to the others. Now here Miss Walters doesn't manage us well, and she believes I was a naughty girl. And, oh! you heard—because Violet told you —about the Confirmation? Miss Alice said I must try and be more fit next time, and be kinder to Miss Walters.'

'Well,' said Daisy, 'if you are so lucky as to have a kind Miss Alice to write to you, I'd do as she tells me. I have a very kind friend; but she is married, and gone to India. It's only now and then I get the treat of a letter.'

'But I'm afraid, if I write to Miss Alice, she'd think me such a

naughty girl. I haven't said the worst, Miss Morris. I'm very unhappy, and it's a severo trial.'

'Well, let's get at it bit by bit. Perhaps Miss Alice was too fond of you to see your faults. Mamma used to say my dear Miss Gertrude spoiled me; anyway, she meant you to use the good she taught you now you are away by yourself. And though it's very hard about the Confirmation, you must be fitter by next year, if you bear it patiently and wait.'

'I don't think Confirmation does people any good, Miss Morris. The girls here don't really care a bit about anything. We were naughty sometimes at Roseberry, but we did care what our teachers thought; but here they don't *respect* anything, Miss Morris. It's just what they like best. Their hearts aren't touched at all, I'm sure.'

Daisy looked at the girl, who was struggling with tears and speaking with difficulty, though the last sentence did not come out quite naturally.

'When I was in my last year, before I went to college, we had lessons from our Vicar on the Christian Year,' she said. 'You've heard of that?'

'Yes, mother has one; she reads it every Sunday. Miss Goodall gave it her. She says there are good words in it, though some of it's very hard reading.'

'Well, do you know the piece about the Catechism?

'Oh, say not—dream not heavenly notes——'

'To childish ears are vain,' said Alice. 'Yes, I can say it.'

'The Vicar explained that to mean, that we could not tell in others, nor always in ourselves, when the real vital feeling was stirred in our hearts; but that we could teach the youngest child to know there was something to be reverenced, respected as you say, and bring them up in right habits. The want of that makes what people call a bad tone. That's what you complain of. It's a great pity—a great miss not to have a good tone; but since I've been about the world more, I've seen that people aren't always as bad as they seem who haven't been brought up to it.'

Probably Alice did not quite follow all this; but she said—

'Lotty Benson *is* a good girl, and she says she's sure there's work going on in me; and—and I ought to come out from among them and be separate, and—and hear the Gospel.'

'What?' said Miss Morris, considerably startled.

'She says—and it's true—that no one else is bound to follow their parents. Sylvia Gore goes anywhere for fun, and our Etty would, only she's afraid of mother. Mother's so strict, and so's father. Oh, Miss Morris, it would be like being a martyr in Miss Alice's stories! But I never, never could write and tell Miss Alice I attended chapel, when she was so sorry if any one did. And if *she's* in the house of bondage.'

Here poor Alice broke down into such floods of tears that Daisy turned rapidly down the loneliest lane she could see.

'She says—she says,' continued Alice, sobbing, 'that she's so happy, and she knows the Saviour; and I'm sure I don't, and I never heard Miss Alice say she did like that—nor mother even. Miss Alice always said "Good people feel" or the "Holy Saints would feel." But, oh, Miss Morris, there's beautiful tales of children converting their parents! Miss Walters read one to us. And Mr. Curtis is an infidel and heretic, and 'twas all from the Church minister where he lived being so worldly, and dining off venison with the Squire. And she says 'tis no wonder the girls are so ungodly, because putting your trust in forms and ceremonies is all they're taught, and dry bones; and I'm sure the Sunday-school is dry bones, Miss Morris. And, oh, what shall I do?'

'Well,' thought Daisy to herself, for she was but a girl, though she had been chosen for a spiritual adviser, 'here *is* a kettle of fish.'

'Well,' she said, 'I've known plenty of giddy ill-bred girls in my time, who were brought up by dissenters; and I don't think you're exactly light-minded, Alice—whatever else you may be.'

'I never knew any chapel girls till I came here,' said Alice; 'because the Miss Whites who *belonged* at Roseberry held their heads very high, and most of the others only went for a change, which mother didn't like. But Lotty says 'tisn't the form or sect, 'tis the hearing the pure Gospel, and if the Salvation Army comes she means to join it. But I shouldn't like to walk in the street with a drum.'

'Now, look here, Alice,' said Daisy, 'you have got your mind into a great confusion. I have no doubt that Lotty Benson is a good religious girl; but she seems to me to forget that "Honour your father and mother" is your first duty.'

'Oh, no,' said Alice; 'but she says I mustn't let them starve my soul.'

'Well, I think you might find enough in the Prayer-book to feed your soul, and I am sure you have been taught to understand that carefully.'

'Oh, yes. I've done the Litany and the Baptism and Confirmation, and got a Diocesan prize and a certificate.'

'At any rate, you weren't brought up by an ungodly minister.'

'N—o! But he did dine with the Squire—on venison too. We always heard when a stag was killed at the Park.'

'Well—I know nothing about stags and venison,' said Daisy; 'but I thought gentlemen always went out to dinner. But Dr. Goodall! Why, Alice, do you know what a great man he is—that he has written beautiful books that do good to hundreds of people. And that it's an honour to you to have lived in his parish. Why—I've heard him mentioned in a sermon! Ungodly indeed!'

'Have you?' said Alice, a good deal impressed. 'He used to pat

my head and say I was a good child. But he isn't here now? And Mr. Anson's a very different sort of gentleman.'

'I suppose,' said Miss Morris, 'you would not like to join—what is it?—the Salvation Army because you have been badly treated at the Church school? You wouldn't think that right?'

'Oh no,' said Alice. 'Mother always said that was a very ignorant-like thing to do.'

'Then what other reason is there, except that Lotty Benson is a better girl than some of your school-fellows!'

Alice hesitated.

'But there's Polly Mason attends chapel, doesn't she? She doesn't seem so very superior.'

'Oh no—no!'

'Now, however you learned it, you do care to be a good girl, and you, at least, wish to be religious, and to love your Saviour'—here Daisy lowered her voice and Alice bent her head. 'You are much too young to change or to understand—and in my opinion it's your duty to obey your father and mother and say your prayers heartily. And then, when the time comes for you to be confirmed, if you feel puzzled you can ask advice.'

Alice looked relieved, if a little disappointed that the path to martyrdom did not lie open.

'Thank you, Miss Morris,' she said doubtfully.

'And I do think,' said Daisy, 'that if it had ever struck you that your Prayer-book and Scripture lessons had to do with anything but themselves you never could have talked about wanting to hear the Gospel elsewhere.'

'But, Miss Morris,' said Alice, the tears rolling down her cheeks, 'it is knowing Lotty Benson that has made me feel that—that I don't love God a bit like she does—though I always did my Scripture, and I thought—I thought I was a good girl.'

'Well, then, Alice, you look at your old lessons again and you'll learn them with a difference. I dare say Lotty Benson does you good—only don't let her lead you to do wrong for the sake of—of—. Even if you did get more feelings they would be no good then.'

Daisy frowned with her own earnestness and perplexity.

'I was going to help Violet with her Confirmation papers against another time—will you come too? And perhaps we can get at anything that puzzles you.'

Alice gave grateful thanks, and went home with her young conscience relieved and her perplexity somewhat transferred to her counsellor.

From the circumstance of her fellow pupil-teacher, Isabel Grey, having been in the conventional sense of the word 'a lady,' Daisy had been in the habit of hearing matters discussed between her and the 'Miss Gertrude,' whose memory she so dearly cherished, from other than the National School standpoint.

She knew quite well how possible it was for whatever religion did exist in a child's mind to be quite apart from 'religious instruction,' and she knew from her own experience, though in a modified degree, the kind of result that comes from entirely uncontroversial teaching, a body of doctrine taught *ex cathedrâ*, while the individual soul is left to grow in reserve and silence. At the same time, in a thoughtful girl like Alice, inheriting her mother's nature, a great respect for and interest in the subject is developed. How else can the soul be prepared, and if the soul is sheltered it grows in peace.

But it is not prepared for the rough contact with all the contending influences of the world. Alice at Roseberry would have been safe, because she would have believed in her teachers; at Dulworth, when attacked, she did not know what to say. This is perhaps why the most promising pupils sometimes disappoint their early trainers. Daisy herself only dimly glimpsed at the notion that Alice's spiritual life must come out of this trial deeper than it went in. She only saw that the child was having an experience that had hardly come to herself.

Then she thought of her other perplexity with Alice's cousin. Good and evil were all mixed up together. Alice it seemed was to find vital religion at a great risk—she herself was seeking for herself and others, cultivation, mutual understanding, at another sort of risk. Ought it to be run? 'Don't do wrong for the sake of feelings,' she had just said. But then—was it wrong? and was not giving up good—wrong? The world was not simple at twenty any more than at fourteen.

CHAPTER X.

THE CLASSES BROUGHT TOGETHER.

When Alice came in after her talk with Daisy, her momentary relief was succeeded by the uncomfortable sense of having to tell her mother that she had not been to school. It did not occur to her to resent Mrs. Woodford's right to ask what she had been doing with herself; but she knew that she should not know how to explain her absence. To her surprise, she entered upon a scene of family discussion. Etty was standing with her back to the little parlour table, looking hot and defiant, the father had his back to the fire, and Mrs. Woodford, sitting in her chair, had a sorrowful and displeased expression on her face.

'"Tis a deal more interesting at the Congregational, there's quite young women in the class, and a red cloth on the table, and the teacher was a very nice gentleman, and said he'd be glad to enrol me. It was all out of the Bible just the same, and I don't see that there's any difference. He read a very interesting tale afterwards, about a dear little child that converted her grandmother, who'd been neglected by the Church minister.'

'It ain't at all necessary for you to set about converting *your* grandmother, Etty, as was a good God-fearing woman before you were born or I either,' said Woodford. 'It would be a deal more to the point if you minded your manners and did as your mother tells you. I've seen young girls in this place carrying on on a Sunday afternoon in the streets as I won't hear of with any of mine, and Polly Mason was among them. You're to go to school with your sisters, and not to no places of your own choosing.'

Etty looked very sulky.

'I think I'd like to go to service,' she muttered, 'and do for myself, and not be interfered with.'

'Go upstairs this minute, Etty,' said her mother, 'and take your hat off and get the tea. Where would you be if father took you at your word, I'd like to know. For shame of yourself!'

Etty shuffled away, conquered for the present.

'Dear, dear,' said Mrs. Woodford, 'that Polly's a bad companion for her. What did the lady say when she wasn't at school, Alice?'

'Oh, mother,' said Alice, blushing and trembling, 'I haven't been to school neither, I went to walk with Lotty Benson; but I met Miss Morris, and I will go to Sunday-school, mother—with Etty, and see to the children.'

'I should think you would indeed,' said her father. 'What's got you all, I should like to know? Why, here's Lily, I'll expect to hear next that *she* hasn't been to the Bible-class either.'

'Whatever makes you say such a thing then, uncle,' said Lily, starting and turning scarlet. 'I'm as regular at Bible-class as any one; but there's something in life besides Bible-classes.'

Lily made this concluding observation under her breath; but when she had disposed of her smart hat she came down to tea in an unusually smiling mood, kissed the children, amused her uncle, and was quite charming.

Perhaps a more wholesome lesson for Alice, at that moment, than Etty's desire to run off with Polly Mason could not have been found. Etty had no desire to be a martyr; she wanted to assert her freedom, and to get more fun and companionship; but Alice felt how much she had failed in setting her a good example. She was still conscious of a rush of contending influences; they were very confusing, but it *was* a contention of influences, not of ideas, and her mind began again to balance itself. But it was a warning of the difficulties that might in after life assail a loyal, scrupulous, and impressionable nature when exposed to so many contending blasts. It was well for her that while she was really far too young and immature to be able to judge for herself, her parents did hold her tight; but it would have been much more usual in her class of life for them to have been indifferent where she 'got good,' and to have left their children entirely to the swaying of their own impulses. And while one girl of fourteen or so is swayed, like Alice Woodford,

by the love of goodness and the recognition of real spiritual religion, fifty, like Etty, take their future part in life from idle imitation of a companion or from ill-tempered vexation at a reproof.

Alice told Lotty Benson that mother would not allow her to go to the Bible Christian meeting; and however much Lotty might regret her failure in bringing in a wanderer, she, on her side, was forced to confess that when Alice submitted to injustice and resolved to do her best at school for the future, and, as she expressed it, forgive her teacher, she showed a really Christian spirit.

In the meantime Miss Walters, during her absence from home, had paid a visit to a friend of long experience as a Sunday-school teacher and manager, and of much wider acquaintance with Church work at large than many. She had been a good deal impressed by her friend's discipline and management on the Sunday afternoon, and had talked out all her troubles with her—naughty girls, careless teachers, ignorant teachers, good teachers who could not combine morning school and attendance at early Celebrations, attractive dissenting treats, the worry of the boys on the staircase, and Mr. Anson's inability to think that anyone could help anything. In the evening she went to Church and heard a sermon from an elderly scholarly clergyman, which impressed her very much. She was young, after all, not ten years older than her refractory scholars, and it pointed out a kind of thoroughness in duty which was new to her. She did not think the sermon eloquent, nor did it occur to her that the preacher was clever, but she came out of Church feeling that she had never set about her religion or her parochial duties at all in this sort of way. And she had just found out what thoroughness meant, for after rather a desultory education she had begun during the winter to attend a school of Art, and for the first time in her life had found out what was meant by really taking pains, and doing her best. When she came out of Church, she was told that the preacher was Dr. Goodall, late of Roseberry. And her friend informed her, that many years ago she had derived her first ideas of thorough Church work from a visit to the parish.

Miss Walters was nearly as much surprised as Alice Woodford, by the goodness of Lotty Benson. Was it possible that Dr. Goodall's daughter *had* been a better teacher than herself? When the Woodfords first came, had not their 'good tone' been rather marked among the others?'

'I suppose I shall find the school in a worse mess than ever when I get back,' she thought. Behold, the mess was a good deal mitigated, and the teachers declared that Miss Morris's management had been wonderful!

Ethel Walters thought of the sermon, she thought of her own sense of failure, she thought with a dreadful pang that some one else had succeeded. And when Mr. Anson, cured of his distrust of day-school teachers, insinuated that if Miss Morris could continue to take

a class, it might be a great advantage, she felt distinctly cross. What business had Miss Morris, whose brilliant singing had struck every one as unsuitable to her station, to prove herself also so competent in her own line? There were drawbacks to those delightful evening meetings.

'However, Ethel Walters had learnt one thing from the spirit in which the popular entertainments had been set on foot, namely, that she had no right to grudge Daisy Morris her success because she was in another station of life. She learnt it by the ardent utterances of the supporters of the movement, and by the example of her own superiors, who took part in it; and though closer contact may cause friction, there was more sense of companionship between the two girls than there would have been if they had not mutually criticised each other's performances every week. Besides which, as a side issue, the advantages of technical training became apparent, and it was borne in upon Miss Walters that knowing how to teach, and how, by rule, to maintain discipline, might assist the personal influence and affection-winning system, which was proving a broken reed to her.

So, on the ensuing Tuesday, as they waited for their fellow-performers, Miss Walters thanked Miss Morris very politely for taking the place in her absence, and remarked—

'I hear they were much more orderly than usual.'

'They seem very nice children,' said Daisy; 'and it was quite a pleasure to take the school, thank you, Miss Walters.'

'I suppose,' said Miss Walters, 'that all Sunday-schools would seem to you very disorderly. I dare say it would be better if the day-school teachers managed them.'

'I don't think a head-mistress could in a large town as the work is now,' said Daisy; 'and I expect the elder girls who have left school wouldn't like it. Besides, it was the kindness of the ladies that made us like our Sunday-school so much.'

'Then you think,' said Miss Walters, hesitating, 'that even if the teaching isn't so—so regular——'

'Oh, yes, Miss Walters,' returned Daisy eagerly. 'We get, as a rule, so little general cultivation; and the Scripture teaching in day-schools must be worked up to pass the inspector. I am sure it is very good for the children to see things from other points of view. But of course sometimes they are apt to take advantage.'

'They are so naughty at prayers, and in going to church. I get quite in despair,' said Miss Walters.

'If you had a little class vacant at any time, Miss Walters, I should like to take it, while my week-day work is so light—very much. And then if I could assist in marshalling the children to church I should be most happy to be of any use; I have had that to do ever since I was thirteen.'

'Oh, thank you, I think that would be a great help; it is very kind of you.'

'I shall like it very much,' said Daisy, who, like many petted pupil-teachers, found it rather dull to have no intercourse with any one out of her own class; and though Miss Walters was not quite like her beloved Miss Gertrude, it seemed natural to have something to do with her. Her fellow assistant-mistress, whose training had been totally different, could not imagine why she mixed herself up with Sunday-schools which it was a mark of independence to avoid, and with people who grudge one one's proper position.

'Ladies can't teach.'

'I don't think Miss Walters knows much about teaching,' returned Daisy, 'but she seems a nice young lady, and you know she never in all her life thought that Pontius Pilate was a Roman Catholic.'

'He was the Roman governor,' said Miss Lane, in a puzzled voice. 'What has that to do with it?' And as Daisy proceeded to explain, some new ideas derived from her early intercourse with cultivated people began to permeate Miss Lane's manual filled brains.

If people would only cultivate the cultivators, how much further their efforts would spread.

But this is a digression. As soon as Miss Walters and Daisy had made their arrangements, they were interrupted by the approach of Mr. Bailey, who came up to Miss Morris, and inquired if she had ever heard of a poem called 'The Raven,' which he proposed to recite.

'Oh, yes,' said Daisy, whom a long course of penny readings had familiarised with most of the stock pieces, 'I've heard it many times.'

'Do you admire it, Miss Morris?'

'Well, I believe it's considered a very fine poem; but I'm not sure that I quite understand it myself,' said Daisy, recalling an early scrape, when she had fallen into disgrace at Flaxby for explosions of giggling, during the performance of this piece. 'I think it strikes audiences as a little odd sometimes.'

'Shall I substitute anything else? "Eugene Aram," "The Maniac," or a more obscure work called "The Murderer's Last Groan." Perhaps that might be new to you.'

'Why—I think "The Raven" is the most cheerful on the whole. The gentlemen in these parts seems to have very gloomy tastes,' said Daisy, thinking of Mr. Cummings' Dead March.

'Tragedy is my line,' said Mr. Bailey, with a cheerful twinkle of his pretty blue eyes. 'But if there was anything in the comic line which you admired, Miss Morris, I would study it at once with pleasure.'

Miss Walters turned away her head to hide a smile; but Daisy caught the look, blushed violently, and said stiffly that she did not wish to interfere with any one's choice of pieces.

'Shakspere—you admire Shakspere?' said Mr. Bailey hopefully.

'Oh, certainly,' returned Daisy.

'I'm very glad of that,' said Mr. Bailey, in a tone of delighted surprise, as if a common preference for Shakspere showed an unusual community of taste, 'for Cummings and I—you will hear, Miss Morris.'

Daisy looked at Mr. Bailey as he stood up reciting 'The Raven,' and some previous remarks of Mr. Woodford's echoed in her mind—such a steady, superior young man, with such ideas for helping his fellow-creatures, kept his Church too, and was sure to get on in life. So he was very superior, and he did recite 'The Raven' very well, if he could have helped looking so very happy. Daisy was glad when her own turn came and distracted her thoughts from him.

She had not forgotten her encounter with Lily, who stood among the glee-singers, looking her very prettiest with a hot-house flower in her dress, a burning bright colour in her cheeks, and a wistful look in her round, kitten-like eyes.

For young Mr. Warren was talking to Miss Vincent, the great ironmonger's daughter, and never turned his eyes towards the chorus. Daisy felt very indignant, the more so, as she saw Mrs. Warren, in an elegant bonnet, sitting in the front row. Last Tuesday the young gentleman had found occasion for many whispers and glances; now, he never gave one. But poor Lily's eyes were less under her own control and followed him about. As her bright colour and her bright flower faded a little, together, Daisy also noted that Mr. Cummings, who had not deserted the chorus, gloomily watched Lily all the evening through, and she began to see why wedding marches were so incongruous with his feelings.

He was very sprucely got up too, with a red camellia in his button-hole, and a book under his arm, at which he glanced occasionally.

'What, Mr. Cummings, are you going to favour us?' said the Rector.

'Yes, sir, I am going to endeavour to throw myself into the prevailing spirit,' returned Mr. Cummings, and accordingly, presently, 'The Quarrel of Brutus and Cassius, from Shakspere's play of *Julius Cæsar*—Brutus, Mr. Bailey; Cassius, Mr. Cummings,' was announced by the chairman. Mr. Cummings gave out Cassius' speeches in a loud and distinct voice, exceedingly suitable to a dictation lesson; he never missed a word, and he stood bolt upright and perfectly still. Mr. Bailey used plenty of action, and did his utmost to look like a noble Roman. For both gentlemen the audience was practically reduced to one.

When the piece ended, amid moderate applause—the gallery hardly appreciated Shakspere—the eyes of Cassius turned wistfully to Lily Woodford, who sat looking on the floor, apparently quite unmoved and uninterested. Mr. Bailey turned to meet Daisy Morris's eager face full of criticism, interest, and enjoyment; and, she, spite of the late alarm, was so much more full of the recitation than the reciter, that she could not help entering on a lively discussion, which lasted all the way home to Laura Terrace, while Lily dragged along beside them with hardly a word.

(To be continued.)

CAMEOS FROM ENGLISH HISTORY.

CAMEO CCXLVI. (*Continued.*)

1664–1667.

PESTILENCE AND WAR.

FUGITIVES camping out in the country were proscribed by those around, and often reduced to terrible straits of hunger. The villages about London suffered terribly. Poplar had in every house one sick or dead. Defoe's account tells of a conversation with a poor waterman who pointed out a house where father, mother, and five children had died. The waterman himself lived by taking provisions and messages to the ships in the river, where the owners had taken refuge with their families. He himself had been shut out from his house, where his wife and one child were sick, the mother recovering, but the child like to die. He brought his earnings daily to the garden, where she received them, and conversed with him from a distance, in a simple God-fearing manner, such as drew tears from the listener.

The most noted of these visitations in the country was that at Eyam, one of the beautiful villages in the ravines of Derbyshire. Introduced by a tailor's patterns, the disease raged in the narrow confined valley; but owing to the resolute faith and strong influence of the Vicar, Mr. Mompesson, it was prevented from extending beyond it. He sent away his little children; but his wife would not leave him, and he kept his people from going beyond their own bounds, the Earl of Devonshire engaging that provisions and medicines should be regularly sent to appointed spots, where money and letters were placed on a stone, and then passed through vinegar. For seven months this arrangement was carried on faithfully on both sides. Lest infection should be communicated within the walls of the church, Mr. Mompesson assembled his flock in a beautiful little dell, branching out of the ravine, and still called Cucklet Church, every Litany day and Sunday. He lost his devoted wife—not from the plague, but from exhaustion from her attendance on the sick; and when the long quarantine was over at last, only a fifth of the parishioners survived.

It was remarkable that there was no case on board the fleet. There had been inquiries on both sides into the battle of Lowestoff, and it was proved before the Houses of Parliament that the slackening of the pursuit was entirely owing to the forgery of Bronkhard, though the enemies of the Duke of York continued to assert in the

face of evidence that the cowardice was the master's, and the servant only the scapegoat. But James, whatever his faults, was a brave and an honest man. He longed to pursue his victories; but his mother was terrified at the danger he had run, and represented to King Charles that it was not fitting to let the only male heir to the crown thus risk his life, when he had only two little daughters—his son having died early. The Earl of Sandwich was therefore appointed to the chief command.

The Dutch, when their shattered fleet came home, were full of rage and despair, and their wrath fixed itself upon Evertsen. Reports had exaggerated the loss, and when he came in sight of the Texel, a small vessel, which had put out to meet him, brought back word that there were no great signs of damage about his ship. He had sent despatches to the States-General describing the battle, complaining of the cowardice of those who had fled, and asking permission to enter the river. The reply was a summons to the Hague to answer for himself before the States-General.

He started in a carriage, but in passing through Briel, he was assailed by a furious mob, who reproached him in the most violent manner, even for the blowing up of the *Eendraght*, pelted him with stones and mud, dragged him out of his carriage, and to the quay, where they pushed him into the water. The old man clung to the prow of a vessel, and kept his head above water, though they pelted him to make him let go. However, the alarm had reached the burgo-masters and garrison, who came rushing down, dispersed the rioters, and rescued the Admiral nearly dead, carrying him to a house, round which, while friends tried to revive him, the mob, excited by the tales of sailors from the remaining ships, raged all night.

A Dutch mob, though slow to be stirred, when once excited is apt to be a very terrible, stubborn and cruel one; and the gallant old Admiral was forced to put on the disguise of a fisherman and leave the town at two o'clock in the dawn of the June morning. An escort of soldiers was required to guard him on his way, and De Witt and the Hollanders managed that the guard before the door of his lodging at the Hague should appear as if watching a prisoner.

The Zeeland deputies indignantly demanded that he should be heard in his own justification, and the old sailor stood before the States, telling simply the history of the engagement, and his appearance showing the outrages he had received; but party was far too strong for justice or patriotism, and instead of applauding the brave old man who had saved the remnant, John De Witt got up and ordered him back instantly to the Texel, to be tried with the other officers by court-martial.

He was taken on board the ship *Middleburg* and treated as a prisoner; but at the Texel nobody would preside at the court-martial, and it came to nothing, since all the captains, indeed all honest and courageous naval men, spoke honourably of him, including Cornelis

van Tromp, who was the popular favourite, and was made an Admiral at thirty-four.

The Zeelanders demanded his entire acquittal, with the thanks of the Republic; but the Grand Pensionary prevented this, and they could only give him the thanks of their own province. Deeply wounded, he retired to Flushing, where he still worked at the fitting out of a new fleet, in spite of the injustice of his country.

In the midst of these quarrels De Ruyter came back from his African expedition, having passed very close to the English fleet under cover of a thick fog. He arrived at West Ems on the 6th of August, and the sight of his trophies filled the Dutch with joy, so that many a woman fell on his neck and kissed him in her ecstacy. De Witt, on receiving his despatches, got up in the night and wrote to him that ninety ships of the line were ready for him to join them and take the command. His answer was that he and his captains were ready to serve again immediately, but that his ships needed cleaning and repair and his crews rest. At once he was appointed Admiral-in-Chief, and went to take the command at Texel a fortnight after his return without even seeing his wife and children

He was received with great delight by all the navy, and though he was of the Lowestein faction, and Cornelis van Tromp and Cornelis Evertsen were Orangemen, his fame overbore everything. Many of the sailors held to the house of Orange, and to keep this feeling in check De Witt himself went on board, and made a cruise with De Ruyter to Bergen to escort home the Indian fleet. The storms that blew the plague from London did much damage to the fleet; two fireships sank, and eight men-of-war with two Indiamen ran among the English and were taken. Lord Sandwich and some of the other officers helped themselves to the treasures, privateer fashion, and on this account Sandwich lost the command of the fleet, which was given to Albemarle, together with Prince Rupert.

So much damage had the Dutch fleet undergone that only in October could De Ruyter again threaten the English east coast; but he found every part of the shore guarded, and could attempt no landing before the winter storms sent him home. Holland was ready to give him a triumph, he was bidden to keep on his hat while addressing the States-General, a silver vase worth £150 was presented to him, and every possible honour was paid to him. He was a simple-minded, simple-mannered, religious sailor, and was by chance overheard praying in his bedroom against being uplifted by pride and vain-glory.

He worked hard at the refitting of the fleet, while De Witt did all he could by diplomacy, and arranged with Louis XIV. a secret treaty for the partition of the Spanish Netherlands, thus inducing France to declare war against England, but against his will, and three months' grace was granted at Charles's request.

De Ruyter had a splendid fleet ready by the spring, eighty-five

men-of-war with 5000 guns, and 22,000 men, 16 fireships and others, making up the whole number to one hundred vessels. His own flagship was called the *Seven Provinces*, carrying 80 guns and 500 men, and was considered as a marvel of shipbuilding. The young Prince of Orange brought the Elector of Brandenburg to visit the fleet at the Texel, when many manœuvres were performed, so as to make a sort of naval review, ending by a grand dinner on board the flagship. The Prince made a liberal largesse, and one of the crew of the *Seven Provinces* thought to delight him by climbing the topgallant mast and there standing on his head; but the cool-headed William was disgusted at such foolhardiness, and De Ruyter would have punished it but for the intercession of the Elector of Brandenburg.

The English fleet had 81 ships of the line in the Downs, under Prince Rupert, the Duke of Albemarle, Sir George Ayscue, and Sir Thomas Allen. The three months' grace were over, and the Duke of Beaufort was reported to be at Bellisle meditating an attack, while the Dutch fleet was said to be not ready to put to sea. In consequence Rupert started with twenty-five ships in pursuit of the French, but both reports were untrue, the French were in the Mediterranean, and the Dutch had sailed out in three divisions, under De Ruyter, Cornelis van Tromp, and Cornelis Evertsen.

On the 1st of June, Albemarle was astonished at the sight of the sea covered with ships at anchor off the North Foreland. His numbers were inferior through the absence of Rupert's squadron, but he had criticised the caution of Sandwich and felt himself bound to give battle, while, moreover, his vessels, though fewer, were the larger. About one o'clock, therefore, Ayscue, under the white flag, begun the battle with Van Tromp. The combat was tremendous, neither gaining a decided advantage, though Van Tromp's ship was so much damaged as to be unmanageable, and two of his squadron were blown up.

Albemarle and Sir Thomas Tiddyman engaged De Ruyter and Evertsen, and there was a continued exchange of broadsides till five o'clock, but on the whole with advantage to the Dutch, as the English were too heavily weighted with guns. Albemarle finally signalled a retreat, fearing to be entangled in the Flemish sands. The *Swiftsure*, where Sir William Berkeley had done wonders in the onset, was so much damaged as to lag behind, when, in spite of her constant broadsides, she was boarded by Captain Adriansen, and there was a desperate fight on her deck. Sir William, with his back to the companion ladder, refused to yield, and fought on, till a pistol shot struck him in the throat. He dropped his sword, and rushed to the cabin, where Adriansen following, found him fallen across the table quite dead. Distinguished respect was paid to his body.

The battle was renewed on the following day, sixteen more ships having joined the Dutch. Again they fought all day, the most

remarkable part of the combat being at the close, when Sir John Harman, Rear-Admiral of the white, was slowly drawing off in his much-damaged *Injury*. Evertsen sent a fireship after him so enveloped in smoke that no grappling-irons could be seen, even when they had seized the ship. The boatswain sprang into a boat, and with his axe cut the irons off, but a second flaming ship came up. Fifty men in terror jumped overboard, the rigging caught fire, but Harman, sword in hand, restored discipline, had water thrown over the masts, and the flaming spars cut down. One of these struck him, but though badly scorched and with a crushed leg, he continued to give orders, and the second fireship was sent adrift. Evertsen despatched a third, but the guns of the *Injury* sunk this midway, and the final broadside gave Cornelis Evertsen his death-wound, while the brave Harman steered for Harwich, and there recovered.

Monk stood for the Thames, and all the next day and all night the battle continued. Monk took all the men out of his disabled ships and left them behind burning, but he had only fifty left, and in the evening the *Royal Prince*, the largest English vessel, with 100 guns, commanded by Ayscue, ran aground on the Galloper sandbank. Albemarle signalled that he could not help her, and Tromp coming up on one side and a fireship on the other, Ayscue was forced to surrender. He and his officers and his most unwilling men were removed, and as De Ruyter thought so large and heavy a prize would be dangerous, he ordered her to be burnt. Tromp was forced to obey, much to his mortification, but the sailors remembered that it was the anniversary of the explosion of the *Eendraght*, and cheered enthusiastically when she blew up.

By this time Prince Rupert had come back from his fruitless quest of the French, and his arrival with fresh ships swelled the English; but morning showed the Dutch in a desperate condition, and in spite of the Admiral's signals all his ships made sail homewards except that of his Vice-Admiral Van Ness, who came on board the *Seven Provinces*.

'What can we do?' said De Ruyter; 'I wish I was dead.'

'So do I,' said Van Ness; 'but we can always die when we like. Let us promise not to part company wherever we go.'

They shook hands and went on deck, and the next moment a cannon ball came through the cabin window and shattered the chairs they had been sitting upon.

Albemarle hoping to have taken De Ruyter prisoner, sent a fireship against him, but the *Seven Provinces* avoided this, and after one more fierce and desperate onset, the English fleet could not venture into the shallows on the coast of Holland, where their enemies were familiar with the currents; and thus, in spite of their great victory, they had only captured two ships, though they had killed two Admirals, seven captains, and 1800 men, while their own loss was ten ships and 3700 men, besides 2000 prisoners. Some French

officers who were on board were so much struck with De Ruyter's courage and skill, and wrote such an account of it, that Louis XIV. wrote him a letter with his own hand, and sent him the order of St. Michael. As Van Tromp was disgraced by the States for his insubordination, Louis sent him an offer of the command of his own fleet with a huge salary; but Cornelis was too true a patriot to accept this proposal, and remained for a time in private life.

A less faithful Dutchman assisted Sir Robert Holmes to take advantage of the shattered state of the fleet of Holland, by taking a squadron of boats and fireships into the channel between Ulle and Schelling, where 150 merchant ships and two men-of-war bound for the Baltic were lying. They were all burnt, with the neighbouring town of Brandaris, and De Witt was so bitterly enraged that he swore that the war should never cease till he had had his revenge. By the beginning of September De Ruyter was at sea with his repaired fleet, Rupert had gone south hoping to join the Duke of Beaufort, so that Monk's numbers were reduced to sixty-one ships, while De Ruyter had only sixty-four much battered vessels. The two fleets still watched one another, while repairing, and on Whit-Monday, the 14th of June, the combat began again, with a desperate and undecided battle, which was ended by a thick fog separating the fleets, when both were frightfully damaged and quite exhausted. Still on the whole, if the weather had been clear, the Dutch would have been the winners; but probably no naval battle ever equalled in fury and obstinacy this combat of giants, as the French historian Sismondi calls it, off the North Foreland.

Charles was at church when the news came to him, and he interrupted the service to have thanks given as for a victory. This offended the people, who held it as a deliverance instead of a victory, and were very sore at the loss of the *Royal Prince* and the shattered state of the rest of the fleet.

John de Witt was impressed by the English valour. 'They may be killed,' he said, 'they cannot be conquered.' The Dutch rejoiced as for a great victory, and in nineteen days another fleet of sixty was ready. Well might Ayscue exclaim, 'You have a prompt nation.' Old John Evertsen came forward again, as patriotically as ever, and on the 2nd of August fought another battle in the same waters, in a calm, the small amount of wind being in favour of the English. Old Evertsen was attacked by Sir Thomas Allen, and the lack of wind prevented De Ruyter from coming to his assistance. The gallant old man died on his deck, a fate he probably preferred to another return as a defeated man to an ungenerous populace.

De Ruyter fought ship to ship with Monk, but had to draw off. Van Tromp had disobeyed orders, and thus had been drawn away in pursuit of Sir Jeremy Smith, so that there was no one to support the little exhausted squadron of the Admiral-in-Chief, where there were so many dead and wounded men that it was difficult to get the guns

properly served, and Prince Rupert, spreading his ships into a crescent form, shut them in on three sides. Night gave a respite to the English Channel, but there was a good deal of sickness on board, and De Ruyter had been very severely injured by a fragment of burning fuse which had struck him in the throat. Moreover, Prince Rupert with his fleet appeared midway, and the Dutch were too dispirited to fight with their Admiral unfit to command, so they ran into Boulogne harbour; while Rupert went to encounter the French under the former *roi des halles;* but the dry, hot east wind which had blown all the summer suddenly changed, and drove him back to take shelter at St. Helen's, on the 5th of September, while Beaufort got safely into Dieppe.

That wind was a memorable one elsewhere. It had been a hotter summer than even the last, the season of the plague, and everything was dried up, water very scarce, when on the 2nd of September about 2 A.M., a fire was detected in a bakehouse in Pudding Lane, near Fish Street Hill. Water was not to be had, the pipes from the New River were empty, and the whisper ran about that a Papist named Grant had been seen turning off the water. The warehouses holding marine stores soon caught fire, and by the next night all Gracechurch Street was burnt, and the flames were spreading all along the riverside. The Lord Mayor Budworth had hurried to the spot; but at first he did not believe in the urgency of the need, and would not call in the aid of the soldiery, and then he lost his head, and, though active enough, was of little use, and when an old woman advised the blowing up of a row of houses to check the progress of the flames, he demurred because he needed the consent of their owners.

The wind rose more and more, and the flames leapt from roof to roof, seizing on places that seemed out of reach. The night, for ten miles round, was as light as day, and a vast and awful column of smoke and flame extended to the sky, broken by the wind into flakes of fire which carried the destruction further and further. In the midst, the cry broke out that the French, or the Dutch, or the Papists were burning the city and about to massacre the inhabitants; but though this added to the terror, no blood was shed, and indeed the loss of life from the flames was very slight.

The King and Duke of York brought the power of command and organisation. They divided the city into districts, put the Privy Councillors in charge of each, brought in the soldiery, and were always to be found where the need was most urgent and the danger greatest. They took upon themselves to blow up the houses, but till the storm of the 5th abated, the wind often carried the flakes of fire over the spaces, and it was impossible to save St. Paul's Cathedral; though the Duke's resolution, in demolishing all food for fire round the Temple, saved that ancient Church, and on the 6th, the King in like manner preserved Whitehall and Westminster Abbey. On the afternoon of the 6th, the wind began to subside, and with it, the

fire; but there was another outbreak in the night near the Temple, and only the King's promptitude, in the demolition of the houses near the Tower, prevented the flames from reaching the magazines there.

By the middle of Friday, the 7th, the fire was really dying down, after raging for five days, though it smouldered in the ruins for weeks after. People observed that it had begun at Pudding Lane and ended at Pie Corner. All the space between the Tower and the Temple lay in ashes, St. Paul's was a black pile of ruins, so were eighty-eight more churches, the Exchange, the Custom House, part of the Guildhall, almost all the beautiful old halls of the City Companies, four of the City gates, 400 streets, containing 13,200 houses, and between three or four millions of property. Some goods, chiefly books, had been stored in the crypt of St. Paul's as a safe place, but they were so heated as to burst forth into flame four days after when the air touched them, and completed the utter destruction of the Cathedral buildings.

In the fields, chiefly between Highgate and Islington, were 200,000 houseless people, most of them beggared. Charles, who for once was showing the better side of the character of Henri IV., exerted himself with all his might to have them fed and lodged, and work in repairing soon was to be found. There was an inquiry into the cause of the fire. A poor mad Frenchman accused himself, but was so evidently insane that he was not convicted, and there could be no reasonable doubt that the fire was the result of accident. Still the habit of attributing every misfortune to the Papists made it habitual with the populace to reproach them with the fire on every occasion when hatred broke out against them.

Rebuilding was next to be undertaken. People flocked back to the ruins, helped by friends, and set up little sheds, and John Evelyn, and Christopher Wren, the nephew of the Bishop of Ely, who had suffered so much during the Rebellion, both sent in plans for a new and splendid city on a regular scheme. Rights of property, however, interfered with any such system, but the ruins were cleared, and enough of St. Paul's patched up for a solemn service of fasting and mourning on the occasion of the fire held on the 10th of October. William Sancroft, who had been made Bishop of London on Sheldon's promotion, preached an eloquent, plain-speaking sermon on the vices of the nation, not sparing Charles himself, who was present, and again showed himself like his Bourbon grandfather, by honouring, though not obeying, the plain-spoken preacher.

St. Paul's, however, was past repair, and Wren was commissioned to prepare plans for that and for many more of the London churches, not reproducing their Gothic architecture, which the taste of the time despised, but in that adaptation of the Classic style to modern requirements which is known as Palladian, from Palladio, an Italian architect of the cinque cento.

Money was scarce, and the fire had made it scarcer. There was great discontent and displeasure. The Nonconformists, suffering under the Five-mile Act, and scandalised at the dissipations of the Court, held that the Plague and Fire were caused by the Restoration; the republican party thought their dislike to a monarchy fully justified; and Algernon Sidney actually had gone to Paris to endeavour to obtain the aid of the French King in restoring the Commonwealth which had been the ally of Mazarin. The Parliament called for the accounts of the expenses of the war, and the great difficulties of finding means to carry it on made both England and Holland listen favourably to Louis's attempts at mediating between them. Four out of the seven Provinces withdrew their contributions to the war, and on the other hand, Charles, unwillingly, and contrary to the representations of his brother, consented that his larger ships should be laid up in ordinary, and only two small squadrons of light vessels kept afloat.

De Witt saw the opportunity of taking his revenge. There were fifty-one Dutch vessels still afloat, and while commissioners were actually discussing the terms of peace at Breda, the seventeen lightest Dutch ships entered the mouth of the Thames, went up the Medway, and bombarded and burnt Sheerness.

Monk hurried to the spot, and tried to barricade the river by sinking ships, but the Dutch found a passage and sailed in, one by one, wind and tide favouring them. They cut off and took the *Royal Charles* and the *Mary*, which were unrigged. In the *Royal Charles* perished a Captain Douglas, who refused to leave her when in flames, because 'a Douglas never deserts his post.'

There was great terror in London; numbers of disbanded seamen were there waiting for pay, which the Admiralty could not give them. Monk did his best from the land batteries, but the enemy reached Upnor Castle, and burnt four more ships there. Prince Rupert had blocked the Thames further up, and the Dutch retreated. They attempted the same feat at Portsmouth, Plymouth, and Torbay, but in vain; and when De Ruyter again attempted to enter the Thames, Sir Edward Spragge beat him off with eighteen ships.

But this danger so near at hand rankled in the English mind, and 'the Dutch ships in the Medway' were remembered as a national disgrace, and charged upon Charles II.

This is, however, far from just. The chief disgrace was the Grand Pensionary's, for taking advantage of the understanding between civilised nations that hostilities should cease while treaties are discussed. Charles and James had both most unwillingly lessened the defensive power of England, and had vainly striven to fortify the very points attacked, but there were absolutely no means at the King's disposal. The naval war could not but be exceedingly costly, and trade had been so much injured by the condition of London in the plague and fire, that customs and dues were far below their

usual average, nor had the system of national credit been then discovered; and though it was perfectly true that the Court was dissipated, luxurious and expensive, it was not this that drained his resources, but these universal misfortunes.

Both nations were, however, exhausted enough to be ready to sign a peace at Breda on the 1st of July, 1667, and Charles II. bore so little grudge to his enemies that when young Engel de Ruyter visited England the next year, he was knighted by the King's hand as a token of admiration of his father.

PREPARATION OF PRAYER-BOOK LESSONS.

XL.

THE BURIAL SERVICE IN THE CHURCH.

Susan. Our service begins with two short rubrics. It is not to be used for the unbaptized or excommunicate, or who have laid violent hands on themselves.

Aunt Anne. Those rules, in an ideal condition of the Church, would obviate the difficulties often brought forward about the hopeful expressions in the service.

S. The service is not used with the unbaptized.

A. No; and many ignorant persons imagine that the denial is uncharitable on the part of the parish priest, when he is simply obeying orders. Proposals have been made for some authorised form to be used in the case of infants of Church people; but none have been agreed upon, and on the whole, the absence of any such rite acts favourably, since it induces many careless parents to have dying children baptized. As to older persons who go willingly without baptism, they are necessarily Dissenters, and as things stand now, any prayers may be used that their ministers or friends prefer.

S. And there is no excommunication.

A. Formally it is never used, and so the priest has no choice but to obey a canon framed in 1661, commanding him not to refuse thus to bury any corpse brought for the purpose, and not under the sentence, under penalty of three months suspension. It was drawn up at the suggestion of Bishop Cosin, to obviate the difficulties of the clergy as to persons not in full communion with the Church. There have been differences of opinion as to whether the clergyman is at liberty to omit the service, when he is not asked for it, provided he does not *refuse*, and all have not acted alike in the matter. In the case of a Mormon, I have known a clergyman give the family the sum required for burying him in the unconsecrated part of a neighbouring cemetery; but it is sometimes a load on the conscience to have to bury with the full service some unhappy wretch cut off in the full midst of a wicked action.

S. And with suicides the rule is clear.

A. The verdict of the jury does away with the personal responsibility.

S. The second rubric directs the meeting at the churchyard gate.

A. Some fine old churchyards have a large flat slab of stone at the

gate for the coffin to be rested on, during any brief delay at the entrance.

S. And the gate is often roofed over as a protection against the weather in such waiting; and it is called the Lych Gate. I suppose from the same word as the German *Leich* or *Leichnam*.

A. Yes. You know the Scotch *lyk* wake, for the watch beside the body.

S. There begin—

'The tones of love that break
The stillness of that horn;
The Resurrection and the Life
Am I—believe and die no more.'

A. Those sentences are really a Processional anthem, and are so used when there are numerous clergy and a choir thus to greet those whom they thus promise the Resurrection in the words of the Blessed Lord and Master to the mourning Martha. That first sentence is traced to the most ancient forms for burial, and the second was in the Dirge of the Use of Sarum.

S. Job's prophecy. It is altered in the Revised Version from Redeemer into Avenger.

A. The Hebrew word, as I have read, is Goël, the same that is used for the revenger of blood as the next of kin.

S. But that spoils the sense.

A. Our word avenger does; but as Bishop Wordsworth explains, Goël did not imply necessarily punisher, but one who delivers his kinsman from captivity, as Abraham did for Lot, one who takes his part, one who wins back his inheritance as Boaz did by Ruth. So a wise instinct, which influenced the minds of our translators, made the word Redeemer, expressing indeed the work of our Blessed Lord to us, though it failed to give the fuller and more tender thought that He is our Elder Brother, our natural Protector, Supporter, Advocate, taking our cause, winning back our inheritance.

S. There is no word, I suppose, in our language that would do so, because the Eastern idea of the Goël covered so much besides the notion of vengeance, and certainly it was best to take, and to keep in our Burial Service, the tenderer, Christian sense of the appellation.

A. But the word Redeemer was only introduced in our Prayer-book in 1549, I suppose from Tyndale, for in the Dirge of the 14th century, where there was versicle and response, the word is *azenbiere*. The third sentence seems to have been added at that time.

S. And very solemn it is!

A. Once there were many Psalms appointed, probably to be selected from and to be sung all the way from the house. They even included that high note of praise the 150th; but, in 1549, the rubric was that certain Psalms might be said in the church, either before or after the burial of the corpse, and these were the 116th, 139th, and 146th.

S. Yes; I see great appropriateness in the 116th, the deliverance from death eternal, and walking in the light of the living. In the 139th, the assurance of the presence of God even in the grave, and 'When I wake up I am present with Thee' for the resurrection; and then in the 146th, besides 'When the breath of man goeth forth, he shall turn again to his earth,' there is the promise to the fatherless and the widow.

A. Yes; but the foreign reformers of 1551 were so extremely afraid of any kind of ceremony being supposed to benefit the deceased that they swept all the Psalms out of the service, and the introduction of the two we now have is owing to the work at the Restoration.

S. I wonder Bishop Cosin did not take the former ones.

A. Probably he thought there was less that the Puritans could take exception against in these, and they both of them are thoroughly suitable for mourners.

S. The 39th is a Psalm of David.

A. Yes; but the occasion of it is doubtful. Some say that this, like the previous Psalm, refers to his silence when his men were about to stone him in their despair at the sight of the sack of Ziklag. Others that it was written at the death of Absalom; and others that it belonged to his extreme old age, after the revolt of Adonijah.

S. The last view seems to suit with the verse about beauty consuming away, and the stranger and sojourner, as all my fathers were. 'Few and evil have been the days of the years of my pilgrimage.' Yes, and 'O spare me a little that I may recover my strength.' And David *did* recover his strength for his beautiful charge and thanksgiving about the Temple. Still it seems to me rather a Psalm for the aged than for the dead.

A. Perhaps so; but the silence speaks of resignation to the mourners, and the spirit is most beautifully drawn out in some lines of Caroline Noel's on a verse in the previous Psalm of which this is a continuation, 'I became dumb, and opened not my mouth, for it was Thy doing.'

'I have been dumb and held my peace,
Because the stroke was Thine,
When Thou didst bare Thy holy arm,
Omnipotent, Divine
Shall mortal man, corrupt within,
Complain that Thou dost visit sin.

Thou didst it, Lord—this sorrow came
Obedient to Thy will;
Thy hands have made me; O, in wrath
Remember mercy still.
I will be silent at Thine awful Throne,
Lord, Thou hast fashion'd me, Thy will be done.'

There are more verses, which you may find both in Miss Noel's own poems, and in 'Sacred Hymns for Mourners' (Rivington), a very precious book for people in trouble.

S. The 90th is the 'Psalm of Moses.' There's no doubt about that. Is not the verse about the threescore years and ten believed to mark that it was at his time that life was shortened from one hundred and twenty years to its present term?

A. That is if we understand 'his days shall be a hundred and twenty years' to mean the length of man's life after the Flood, instead of the length of warning given to the world 'while the ark was a preparing.' It is true enough at present, whatever may have been the occasion of its utterance. It is a Psalm full of the individuality of the writer. One can go along with the aged Lawgiver and leader, who had gone through those three wonderful stages, as the Egyptian prince student, as the desert shepherd, as the inspired champion and mediator, feeling that amid all the changes of life—all the coming and going—One alone was sure and Eternal, as rock, while mankind were as the shifting sands of the desert. He, with his one hundred and twenty years and natural force unabated, had seen generations of his people fade, and renew themselves again and again, some by ordinary old age, some in the blasts of vengeance for their sins and at the best, how soon they were gone! Nothing the same with him through life but He who had talked with him face to face! And then the prayer, coming from one who was only to see, not to enter in.

S. 'Shew Thy servants Thy work and their children Thy glory.'

A. So often prayed, so often accomplished.

S. I am glad the final blessing is in the Prayer-book words, 'Prosper Thou the work of our hands upon us, O prosper Thou our handiwork.'

A. Those words are very dear to me, and yet the other version, 'Establish Thou the work of our hands,' gives a sense of permanence and strength. Both, indeed, like the conclusion of the Lesson, breathe the spirit of,

> 'Then cheerly to our work again,
> With hearts new braced and set,
> To run untired Love's blessed race
> As meet for those, who, face to face,
> Over the grave their Lord have met.'

S. I suppose the Lesson was appointed in the first Prayer-book.

A. Part of it had been originally the Epistle in the Mass for the Dead. I believe it was read at the grave in the intermediate time between the Reformation and the Restoration.

S. Bad weather must have made that very inconvenient.

A. In 1662 there was a remonstrance against the injunction for baring the heads at a funeral, because of the difficulties of weather. And certainly, when the bearers are often much fatigued, and the mourners may have walked far, and be exhausted with grief, it is better that these wonderful words should fall on their ears, calming them during the rest in church.

S. It is St. Paul's grand argument for the Resurrection of the body.

A. Which, you know, was the hardest part of all his doctrine to the Greeks, philosophic and scientific; even as it is still the stumbling-block to our present Materialists, and those ever so slightly infected by them. The continued existence of the soul was almost universally accepted; but the renewal of the decomposed body was then, and alas, is now, laughed to scorn. But St. Paul worked it out, in convincing words, for the honest convert, equally inspiriting to the believer. Death came through the sinning man, Life through the perfect Man, and as to the corruption of the body, how is it with our daily experience of the seed and the plant—so changed, yet the same? So the natural body shall have its individual identity, and yet be a spiritual body. What would Christianity be worth otherwise?

S. I can never understand the verse about being baptized for the dead.

A. Even the early Church did not. Some heretics, when a catechumen died, baptized a person beside his body in his stead; but this was plainly a puerile misunderstanding. It is better explained as chiming in with the other plea, why should we Christians live in danger, distress, and jeopardy if it were not for the future hope. Why should we be baptized, undergoing outwardly the likeness of death, inwardly a death to guilt, and a resurrection to the new life made everlasting by Christ's Resurrection—He being the first fruits of them that slept? So every Baptism bears witness to the Resurrection of the dead, or else it is a mere vain ceremony. Thus the verse may be understood—or in another way—each freshly baptized person steps into the ranks of the Militant Church, to take the place of the comrade dead at his post, and why should we fight at all if the dead rise not.

S. And what a song of triumph comes then!

A. Yes; carrying us on to that great restitution of all things when Death is swallowed up in Victory—and thus bringing us to the verge of the grave with glimpses of the Light beyond. It was here that funeral sermons, such as were the rule with distinguished persons in the 17th and 18th centuries, were preached, and might still be, if thought desirable; and it is the time when the Celebration would take place.

SHORT ESSAYS.

BY ELIZABETH M. SEWELL.

ESSAY IV.

THE SUAVITER IN MODO AND THE FORTITER IN RE.

THE *suaviter in modo* and the *fortiter in re*—gentleness in manner, and strength in action—which is the more important? I say this to myself often, feeling almost hopeless of finding the two qualities united either in my own case or in that of my neighbours.

I imagine most persons will be inclined to choose strength in action rather than gentleness in manner, if the choice must be made. But then how often is strength converted into weakness by the failure of gentleness! How often it misses its end and object! How often the wisdom and goodness which may be its motive power cease to be perceptible.

And is gentleness of manner necessarily weakness? Is there any necessary connection between the two things; or rather, is not gentleness in itself a great power, a strong influence?

The inquiry is perplexing. It is evident to every thoughtful mind that the *suaviter in modo* and the *fortiter in re* ought never to be separated, and that in so far as they are separated they fall short of God's Will. But the separation is so common, owing to the imperfection of our human nature, that we have learnt to consider it almost a matter of course; and thus the question as to the relative importance of a gentle manner, and of strength in action, arises from time to time, and will probably continue to do so, though we feel the inquiry to be vain.

Perhaps we shall gain a clearer view of the subject if we put the question in another form, and ask which is the more to be regretted—gentleness without strength, or strength without gentleness?

I am inclined myself to think that it is the strength without gentleness which is the more to be regretted, and that because it has the greater natural power. The man who can command others ought to be able to command himself. In so far as he cannot, or does not do so, his strength is more apparent than real; and the fact that the world gives him credit for strength, and that he even claims it for himself, increases his condemnation.

A gentle manner is—as I said before—an influence, a very strong influence. As it is sometimes disappointing, and raises hopes which cannot be fulfilled, it may so far be said to do harm, but the harm is negative. We look indeed for the strength in action which we have

a right to expect will follow the pleasant words and kind manner, and failing to find it we are likely to become distrustful and suspicious of the individual, but we still are soothed by the gentleness. We go away vexed, but we do not therefore feel that roughness and abruptness are desirable. The offence has taken no positive form. We have been met so far; we only wish that we could have been met farther. Adapting a well-known saying: Gentleness is not 'high treason against virtue,' while its absence is so decidedly. Many a man's power for good is marred, if not fatally destroyed, by his passion, or rudeness, or even abruptness and want of courtesy, and I think it is this which makes one so pained in the case of others, so full of self-reproach in one's own case, when there has been any failure in gentleness.

And the *suaviter in modo* is, I think, often misrepresented and sometimes maligned, whilst the *fortiter in re* is certain to be respected. A very pleasant kindly manner may be attractive, but the hard experience of life leads us too often, at first, to distrust it. The late Bishop Wilberforce was really injured in public estimation by his remarkably sweet voice and cordial manner. The reticent Englishman, as a rule, shows his friends instinctively the average of his regard, but the Bishop showed just what happened to be the amount of feeling at the moment, and having considerable powers of sympathy, he expressed a degree of interest which could not, in the rush of such a life as his, be maintained. So people accused him of insincerity, very unjustly, and yet not entirely unreasonably. He was an exceptional man, judged by an average standard, and his reputation suffered in consequence.

I suppose we may almost all have met with similar cases in the circle of our own friends and acquaintances. I know for myself that one of the truest friends I ever made in life, had such a soft, sympathising manner, that I instinctively withheld my confidence in her sincerity until another friend, whose truthfulness was almost bluntness, said to me—

'I really believe that So-and-so is quite genuine.'

And this distrust, which, I think, we, English, especially feel when we meet with a very soft manner, has, no doubt, tended in many cases to induce a certain pride in a manner which is the reverse of soft. Out-spoken, honest, true, are epithets often added as an excuse for abruptness and even rudeness. And so, persons who are aware that they fail in gentleness, gloss over the fault, and, in some cases, even turn it into a virtue. I would rather, myself, look at it as it really is—an infirmity always—an offence against good manners frequently—a sin more often than we are aware of.

For what does this abruptness and want of courtesy arise from? Sometimes, it may be said, in excuse, from shyness. Granted. A little child turns away and frowns when spoken to by a stranger; it says decidedly, 'No, I won't,' and the mother or the nurse will excuse it. But we are not little children, and if shyness is an infirmity to

be excused, it is also an infirmity to be conquered. If we could learn to think of other persons instead of imagining what they think of us, we should make a great step towards overcoming shyness.

Years ago I was very much amused by the total absence of shyness in one of the most gentle-mannered, retiring girls I ever knew. It was at a private dance for quite young people. My friend was one of the family. Amongst the guests was a lad of seventeen or eighteen who had been but little in society; he stood apart not knowing what to do. The party was scarcely formal enough for regular introductions, and some one whispered to the girl, who—in entire forgetfulness of self—was busying herself with finding partners for every one, 'You must go and ask him to dance yourself, he does not know how to get on.' Without a moment's hesitation, or a thought of shyness, she went up to the youth, asked him to dance with her, made herself very agreeable, set him at his ease, and then, when the dance was over, went off to be kind to some one else. It was a very little matter, but it was an indication of a character which has been maintained through life. In no position and in no circumstances did I ever know or hear of this young girl doing or saying anything awkward or abrupt. She was never shy, because she was kind-hearted and absolutely free from self-consciousness.

It must be remembered that I am not blaming shyness, I am only accounting for it, so that it may be struggled against. It can generally be traced to self-consciousness, which as often as not has its root in an exaggerated sense of deficiency. Children who are perpetually hearing remarks made upon their personal appearance, their awkwardness or ungainly tricks, cannot help being self-conscious and consequently shy. And yet the awkwardness and ungainliness must not be suffered to pass without notice. It is, perhaps, more the time and mode of reproof which cause shyness, than the reproof itself. A girl whose manner is noticed before strangers, becomes awkward of necessity. I have a vivid remembrance, myself, when quite a child, of the intense pain I suffered when a kind old friend made some personal remark about me, as I was allowed to appear in the drawing-room before a number of people. What was said I do not recollect, but I know the precise spot in the room on which I was standing at the time, and can recall the remark which was made in answer to what, I have no doubt, was a shrug of my shoulders and a look of temper and annoyance. 'Such a sensitive little creature!' Yes, I was sensitive, and so would any one else have been sensitive who had had the general attention directed to some peculiarity of look or manner. Praise or censure would have been all the same in such a case. 'My dear, never make personal remarks,' an old aunt of mine used to say. Certainly, they should never be made before strangers at any age past infancy.

And then another cause of a deficiency in the *suaviter in modo* is impatience. In fact, I suppose it would be the most common reason

given for it. Quick perceptions and an eager will make it very difficult to speak gently and quietly. When we have reached the end of the speaker's sentence before all the words have been uttered, and have arrived at a decision before it has been asked for, the impulse naturally is to save time by saying at once what we think, and then of course we give offence. It is natural to wish to be heard to the end of what one has to say, and to have the appearance of consideration bestowed on one's words; and the very wisest reply that can be given to a question, will be offensive if spoken as if the adviser had not troubled himself to think about it. This is really a matter for self-inquiry. If we are by nature quick in perceiving, and hasty in forming decisions, we shall almost certainly be liable to abruptness, and it is our duty to be upon the watch and keep a guard upon ourselves, instead of laying the blame of our want of courtesy upon the tiresomeness or dulness of the person with whom we are conversing.

But again—a mistaken desire to be true is a most fruitful cause of want of gentleness. There is an idea, very prevalent in the world, that truth, and what is sometimes termed out-spokenness (if one may coin a noun) go together, just as softness and insincerity are supposed to be naturally allied. These popular delusions do a great deal of harm. A blustering, self-asserting man, who professes to give his whole mind without reserve, too often merely succeeds in giving the outcome of his temper and prejudices. He says what at the moment he feels, and this he calls truth, and to him at the moment it is truth; but real truth, what we actually in our secret hearts and our best moments know to be truth, is a residuum—the result of a careful weighing of facts and balancing of reasons. Hasty assertions are no more truth than the answer of a witness in a Court of Justice, who when required to state whether he was or was not present on a certain day, at a certain place, is expected to say simply 'yes' or 'no,' leaving it to further examination to modify or explain the answer. A bare fact may be, and often is, misleading; by which I mean that it may unwittingly give a false impression. When we say to a person who comes to us in a difficulty, the result of his own misconduct, and tries to excuse himself, 'I think you wrong, I feel that you deserve what has come upon you, and I cannot help you, and therefore it is better to say so at once,' we are no doubt outspoken, and we intend to be true; but if we lead the unfortunate individual to think that we have no pity or sympathy to bestow upon him we are likely to be untrue, for in all probability we are very sorry for him, and long to be able to help him, only we do not see the way to it. To say this would be just as easy as to be severe, but the pride of supposed truth makes the gentleness appear weakness, and we refrain.

And in the reverse case, when we really do mean to give help, and are planning how to do it, the *fortiter in re* is equally injured by the

absence of the *suaviter in modo*. We do ourselves injustice, and what is far more important we do injustice to virtue and Christian charity when we make kind acts unpleasing. This is a very common fault with many of us in dealing with the poor. We have probably been so often taken in that we have learnt to be suspicious, and so the suffering fellow-creature comes before us in a doubtful garb, and we show our doubts unconsciously. It is very difficult not to do so; but we often give unnecessary pain and humiliation which no after kindness can effectually soothe. And so also if we happen to be clever and quick-sighted as to the follies of our fellow-creatures, we are nearly certain to be forgetful of the *suaviter in modo*, when discussing characters, or making comments upon actions. Such an one is so silly, or so rude, or so narrow-minded! We cast our censures about behind the unfortunate individual's back, not in the least considering the strength of the blow we are giving to his social or domestic character. Having thus confirmed ourselves in our own opinion (for spoken words give substance and form to unspoken thoughts), we perhaps have to meet the person we have been censuring, and discuss with him some question of mutual interest, and if we happen to differ we unconsciously show our secret opinion of him in our tone and manner, and thus give offence. This surprises us, we have said what we felt to be true, we had a right to differ, we meant no unkindness, why should we be blamed? The answer is that we have estimated the power of our words by their weight and not by their momentum. The difference of opinion which would have been accepted readily if pronounced gently, startles and shocks when set forth hastily and abruptly.

If we would keep a check upon our uttered words we must first keep a check upon our unuttered judgments. The caution is, I think, specially necessary for all persons who have a love of power and are placed in a position of authority. The habit of censuring is soon acquired, and when it is our duty in nine cases out of ten to reprove, we fail to perceive that in the tenth we should have done better by being silent. And this fault-finding tone is, it must be remembered, noticeable in persons who are really humble before God, who honestly feel themselves to be miserable sinners, and make their confession from the depths of their hearts. Their only mistake is that they are so anxious to make others as good as they desire to be themselves, that they cannot wait God's time. Young teachers who are thoroughly interested in their work, are irritable with the dull pupils who care nothing about it. The middle-aged governess who has learnt the inestimable value of early good habits, is indignant with the vapid girl who wastes her time. The mother, anxious above all things for her children's moral principles, is unreasonably disturbed by their shortcomings. The wishes are right, the feelings are natural, but when repeatedly expressed, with all the intensity of earnest sincerity, they fail of their effect because

they strike upon unprepared minds. The more we desire to work ourselves the more need there is to remember that the desire is not universal, and that the few may be commanded, but the many must be led.

And then again there is self-confidence. Such a curious quality; without which the *fortiter in re* is almost unattainable, yet by which its effect is continually marred. To know what we can do! Is anything more needful? for if we undervalue ourselves we shall attempt nothing. To know what we cannot do! Is anything more difficult? for if we try to fathom our own ignorance we sink in the gulf of despair.

Human beings—civilised, social beings, may at first sight be fairly divided into two classes—those who know their own powers, and work well and wisely, and those who do not know them, and therefore work badly or not at all. But there is a third class who have strength, who do work well, but who unfortunately are so imbued with the conviction of their own powers, that they find it next to impossible to recognise that other persons have powers also.

They go through life as a great artist may be supposed to do, with the knowledge—a perfectly true knowledge—that they possess certain gifts; but they do not recognise the limitations of these gifts. They have a general sense of having good judgment, good sense, and an aptitude for all useful works, and they look for attention and respect from their friends, and obedience from their children and dependents as a matter of course. The idea that it is possible to be mistaken, to decide unwisely, to arrive at a wrong conclusion, does not seem to suggest itself to them, and they are generally so useful and practical in daily life, and so helpful in emergencies, that by a kind of tacit agreement their claims to supremacy are uncontested.

Such persons when they meet others on business matters are deferred to, their opinions are asked, or indeed given unasked. They pronounce dictatorially what should or should not to be done; and the decision is generally accepted. If a parish entertainment is to be given, they know exactly what ought to be the arrangements; they put every person and thing in what they declare to be the right place, and probably their opinion is good; at any rate it requires an effort to oppose them. For the world, taken as a whole, is an indolent world, and to contradict the individuals in whom the *fortiter in re* is strongly developed is running the risk of an unpleasant contest of words which every one feels will be better avoided. And the same spirit is exhibited in domestic matters. The entrance of these competent individuals into the family circle is the signal for the withdrawal of any rival claims. The questions which may arise will at once be settled; differences of opinion as to plans will vanish; weak efforts to be useful will be stopped by the work being undertaken by the one who can do everything. The family in

general has a sense of inferiority, of the necessity of submission, extremely wholesome no doubt, but not always quite agreeable. As a rule, I think, in well-ordered households, contention under such circumstances is avoided. 'We give in' is the motto, and by 'giving in' peace is secured, and if the supreme authority is fairly sensible, the result of submission may not in the long run be injurious to the general interests. But for the individual who thus rules, it may be doubted whether there can be any position more likely to foster insidious faults which fatally mar the beauty of the Christian character. One thing is certain, that this kind of exhibition of the *fortiter in re* is extremely disagreeable. We all wish to have a little deference shown to our judgments and opinion; we may be painfully aware of our own deficiencies, but we shrink from having them forced upon our notice. It may be only a question of tying up a parcel, or beginning a piece of work, yet we do not like to have our endeavours cut short by a half contemptuous, half good-natured seizure of the parcel or the work, accompanied by the exclamation, 'Give it to me; I will do it. It is no use for you to attempt it.'

The odd thing about this kind of governing temperament is that it is not strictly speaking owing to conceit—that is to say, it does not involve any absurd pretension to powers which are not possessed. The mistake seems to lie in undervaluing or not recognising that others may have them also. I once asked a friend who had this peculiar phase of character, but who was at the same time spiritually humble-minded, and thoroughly unselfish, whether she had the conviction when she saw any ordinary thing done by another person that she could do it better herself; and the answer was without hesitation, 'yes.' Naturally the conviction displayed itself when she did not intend it. Kindness and thoughtfulness might be, and were shown in every action; but it was a kindness which almost always made the person to whom it was shown have a sense of being taken care of, and advised for good, by one who knew better than any one else.

Our American cousins, amongst their many newly-coined and very expressive words, have one which especially describes this kind of practical power. They call it *faculty*, and I often ask myself whether faculty is not a more important gift than genius. At any rate I think it is to women whose daily duties and employments make practical work of a varied kind essential. But the cases in which this possession of faculty is accompanied by gentleness are, I am inclined to think, rare.

It is the *fortiter in re* exhibited by itself which makes the term 'a strong-minded woman' a term of reproach. Why should not women be strong-minded? In the present day especially, when compelled, as so many are, to work not only for themselves but for others, when to depend upon relations is to encourage a vain hope, and to shrink from a prominent position may be a weak avoidance of duty, strength of mind is above all things needed by those who have to

make their way for themselves through life, unaided and unguided. It ought to be an honour to be called strong-minded, but it is not. The epithet has in it a savour of contempt and aversion. Why? Because the *fortiter in re* has, from the natural infirmity of human nature, been detached from the *suaviter in modo*. The women who from circumstances have been compelled to undertake what has usually been considered men's work, have too often forgotten that the change of employment does not involve a change of nature, that a woman is a woman still;—that she was made by God weaker in body than man because (if one may venture to assign the cause of any of the Divine acts) it was intended that she should depend upon man for physical support, and be content to place herself in a subordinate position. Her voice is softer, because she was meant to speak softly. Her hands are smaller, because they are to be employed upon the small things of daily life. Her feet are sooner weary, because she was intended to content herself with more restricted movement. Nature points to gentleness as the characteristic of a woman, and when gentleness is set aside, and the assertion of strength (for it can never be actual strength) is put forward in its stead, the result is either an affectation of manliness which is a miserable form of vanity, or a real striving after it which produces a monstrosity. These are old-fashioned ideas, I am well aware they are not likely to be palatable to all, but they have common sense for their foundation—that I am perfectly sure of—for they rest on the facts of Nature as it is, and not as we, in our conceit and folly, are often too much inclined to think it ought to be.

Again and again I go back to Bishop Butler's caution, applicable to all cases, against building a world upon hypothesis instead of attending to the constitution of Nature. When men and women are equal in size and equal in bodily strength, then by all means let us give them the same education, open to them the same professions, make them soldiers and sailors, magistrates, and Members of Parliament. Till then may it not be more in accordance with God's laws that they shall be first and through everything—women; trained to be gentle and retiring in manner, however firm they may be in action; tender and thoughtful in spirit, however earnest and persevering in duty; shrinking from publicity though circumstances may force it upon them; and with but one desire—to bring to perfection the germs of a pure and holy influence which God has bestowed upon every woman by the very constitution of her being.

CONVERSATION ON BOOKS.

BY THE EDITOR.

Arachne. What have you been reading lately?

Spider. Biographies, which I want to talk over, for I think you have read the same, though they are not very new. No. 1. *Madame Mohl.*

A. Miss O'Meara's life of her, I suppose, you mean, for I am told that the Life and Letters published by her own family show much more depth and earnestness than the outward life which is here given with the eccentricities made the most of.

S. Yes, it is most amusing. There are things one cannot forget, such as her name of *Celui-ci* for the Emperor, and her behaviour when he sent an invitation to her, because she had defended the character of his bride, and she tore it up and turned her back on the Chamberlain, saying, 'I defended an honest woman, not the Empress. It was like 'The hand of Douglas is his own.' Her immunity shows how much more magnanimous Napoleon III. was than his uncle.

A. Yes, she was a most high-spirited woman, with much that was noble about her, and it is sad to read how her sun went down in gloom, and how she missed those troops of friends that should have accompanied old age.

S. It was in great part owing to the break up at the Franco-German war.

A. True; but though she had more religion than we should gather from the Memoir, still she lived out of herself, and depended on externals which forsook her. The next life is a very different one. Monseigneur de Mérode.

S. In Lady Herbert's translation. He is a most attractive person.

A. By the way, translators should be warned against rendering *amour propre* by self-love, which we associate with selfishness, whereas the French always use it in the sense of vanity or self-satisfaction. But that I only mention because it occurs in the letter in which Xavier de Mérode casts aside the praise he had won by his brilliant courage in an Algerine battle.

S. He was really an ideal soldier—like one in a chivalrous religious romance—full of courage, and spirit and wit, and yet so deeply devout, picking up the dying Arab child and carrying it on his horse to a spring to baptize it, refusing a duel, which I thought no soldier on the Continent *could* do.

A. I have heard an old English officer, who had served through the duelling times of the army, declare that a right-minded man,

with tact and temper, need never be driven to fight a duel. Besides, Mérode's position was exceptional, as a Belgian officer volunteering and on the staff.

S. He might pair with the noble English sailor, Rodolf de Lisle, whose history by Mr. Oxenham is so full of beauty and interest. But he died in front of his gun at Tel el Kebir just about the age when Mérode's second career was beginning, and that is very remarkable too. The Belgian was so entirely unlike the regular Italian ecclesiastic that the Pope's great affection and confidence in him were curious, and not at all understood at Rome, where they called him *il matto*, and a few centuries ago would certainly have poisoned him.

A. I expect that it was the true nature of Pius IX. that so delighted in the upright high-spirited Fleming. You know the Pope had been once intended for a soldier, and that after his reign began, his broader, more liberal measures filled his people with hope; but that the revolutions frightened him, and then he let other influences stifle all expression that might tend to a change of system. The real man found relief in the friendship of Mérode.

S. And how strong and independent Mérode was, and how he made his military knowledge available as long as there was any hope for the temporal power. Only it was all on the wrong side.

A. We think so, because we believe that temporal power was the great snare of the Papacy, and that ecclesiastical misgovernment did much harm at Rome; but in many a struggle, good men honestly take different sides. To a Roman Catholic like Mérode, these attacks were sacrilege, and his army fought in the spirit of Crusaders. You see, too, that he reformed all in his power.

S. Altogether he was worthy of being the brother-in-law and pupil of Montalembert. All the devotional and charitable side of his life is beautiful—his going off at night to confirm dying children; his care of the convents and the poor; his bringing water to the village in distress.

A. And next we turn to a Bishop of our own Church, James Hannington.

S. One of our martyr Bishops!

A. It is a noble life, and full of individuality, and showing the training by the Hand of God in holiness and self-devotion.

S. I have not read it all, but I opened the book on the table of a room where I was waiting, and I was amazed to find that he was such a tease, and in bad taste too! I do so detest the spirit of teasing that I never could imagine it in a really good and holy man.

A. His biographer, Mr. Dawson, allows that he was not well managed in his childhood, though his parents were excellent people, and he always regretted the kind of private education he had. I supposed it failed to give him instinctive courtesy, and spoilt his ideas of lawful playfulness. Even at the worst, we are assured it was all so merry and good-humoured that no one could take offence, and

at the last visit to England, after his real work had begun and after his terrible illness, he was infinitely more gentle and tender. It was one of the natural defects smoothed away by Grace through suffering. And his superabundant spirits and vitality were gifts to bear him through all that he had to undergo. I suppose no one ever fulfilled more truly the Gospel command to be ready to forsake wife, children, and everything else.

S. His wife must have been equally noble never to be a hindrance.

A. She must. She bravely supplemented his work both in his home ministry and his missionary course. There must have been something about him that inspired immense love. The leave-taking at Hurst by all the roughest characters in the parish is most touching. Such a man might well be the salt of the earth.

S. Bishop Titcomb's life is less interesting, 'A Consecrated Life.' I can't bear fancy names for biographies, it just hinders one from getting the right ones!

A. Hindrances from his own health and his family's hindered his work at Rangoon, but he was a kindly, pious man, though not remarkable. We pass to Bishop Fraser of Manchester. His life by Tom Hughes is well worth reading, as that of a thorough-going, hard-working practical Englishman, doing with all his might whatever he had to do. I do not think his nature was eminently fitted for the Episcopate, but when made a Bishop he worked nobly and most beneficently among his people.

S. And what a good son he was.

A. Yes, the conscientious eldest son of a young widow has a grand training in considerateness through early responsibility.

S. The book somehow gives a sense of hurry and want of repose.

A. I do not know whether it is the effect of the busy life that Bishop Fraser led up to the last, or whether Mr. Hughes has sacrificed the devotional side of the character to the popularity of the book. Be that as it may, he did his work nobly, and was a most faithful and vigorous witness for the truth, leaving a great mark in his diocese. Such biographies bring home the saying that, 'Wisdom is justified of all her children.'

S. You are thinking of Lord Shaftesbury.

A. Yes. Those three thick volumes of his life fill me with many thoughts, in which admiration for his own character predominates. Never was there a more thorough or consistent impersonation of Christian chivalry.

S. Yet surely he was thought an enemy of Church feeling.

A. He meant to be a devoted champion of the Church, and he loved her, but he did not understand her cause. He had very little time for theological study, and growing up when the old evangelicalism was the religion of earnest minds, his opinions took their colour from them, and never varied. But one beauty of the book is his perfect absence of rancour against his opponents, and his

readiness to meet them on common ground. Compare his relations to Dr. Pusey with those of Bossuet to Fénélon, and you feel how truly Christian both our contemporaries were. The memoir makes me feel too that if he failed to understand our principles, we failed to understand him, when his philanthropy was thought unreal by those who had seen the cottages on his estate, little knowing that this was all his father's fault, and that he was denying himself to the utmost to be able to improve them. Nothing is plainer than the folly of hasty judgments.

S. It was his championship of the desolate and oppressed that was the glory of his life.

A. Yes; to look back on the terrible white slavery of little children in factories, mines, brickfields, and the like, the chimney-sweeps, and all the other sufferers, makes us feel that the man who persevered in this cause, year after year, was verily as great a redresser of wrong and cruelty as ever existed.

S. To read *Social Arrows* makes one hope that the beneficent championship has been taken up by Lord Meath.

A. May we never be without a brave defender of the weak to step into the place left empty. And many there are at work now, whose names we shall never know, in all the many agencies for one branch or other of the great work of aiding our neighbours to be Christians in faith and practice.

S. And to come to other books. Here is Mrs. Townsend's *What to Read*—the catalogue of books useful for the G. F. S. Did you see that the *Saturday Review* called it a list of what *not* to read?

A. Either not in the least understanding the purpose of the list, or wilfully overlooking that it is not intended to mention books for their literary merit, but for their safety and possible benefit to young half-educated girls.

S. But there are many real standard books mentioned.

A. Yes, and it is very desirable that these should be read; but there is also an immense class of readers for whom it is well to suggest the wholesome, though perhaps commonplace tale; and this is well and carefully done. The National Society is bringing out another book something of the same stamp, but suggesting food for a somewhat inferior stamp of readers, such as school children and the clients of parish libraries. It is called *What Books to Lend and What to Give.* The National Society has some very nice books this autumn fit for all readers. Miss Bramston's *Uncle Ivan* is a political exile, long before the days of Nihilism, whose nieces have to defend his papers from a spy, and very delightful young people they are. Miss Peard's *Prentice Hugh* is about the carving of the lovely capitals of the columns in Exeter Cathedral. Miss Yonge's *Under the Storm* gives the doings of a farmer's orphan family during the great rebellion, when they have to guard the church plate. Esmé Stuart has a nice story of a little waif from Portsmouth, called

For Half-a-Crown, the price actually paid for the poor child, and the best of all is Miss Palgrave's *A Promise Kept*. It is a very striking story of a young girl, whose enthusiasm stirs a youth into devoting himself as a missionary in Africa, and when it comes to the point, fails in courage, and will not go with him. Ever since I read it, I have thought of the right explanation of St. Paul's conclusion about the Isthmean Games: 'Lest when I have preached to others, I myself should become a castaway. Lest when I have called others into the arena, I should be unworthy to do my part.'

S. It must be like Holme Lee's *The Title to Honour*.

A. Only there Eleanor did not profess any enthusiasm from the first.

S. There's a whole batch of pretty books for the Jubilee from S. P. C. K., with covers with bells ringing, only I am afraid they will wear out very soon. Mrs. Macquoid's are all foreign stories—pretty; but I don't think they will be half so useful as Mrs. Sitwell's. *Baby's Prayer-book* and *Northcape Cave* are just what I like for the school-children. *The Railway Garden* is more 'grown up,' but very good indeed; and so is Mrs. Walford's *Polly Spanker's Green Feather*, which is very funny too. Then there is Mrs. Molesworth's pretty story of *The Abbey by the Sea*, and also *Stories of Three Girls* of the wild laundry sort.

A. 'The poor Lavenders.' Yes; we are well off for books for the parish this winter, counting in also two admirable books of Mrs. Lawson's for the women, *The Black Copse* and *Two Old Women* (S. P. C. K.), also a capital book of larger size, *By Northern Seas* (Church Extension Society), and as an adventurous tale, *Devon Boys*, by Manville Fenn (Blackie).

S. Another tiny book I must show you, *Chips from the Royal Image* (Masters)—beautiful selections from the Eikon Basilike. Every one has heard of the Eikon Basilike; but I am afraid few believe in it, and fewer read it.

A. Those who read it are nearly sure to believe in it, and here the choicest passages are consecutively arranged in subjects.

S. I had nearly forgotten that I found our old friend *Madame's Grand-daughter* has been republished in that capital series of tales of Hatchard's. Likewise a very charming Irish story of Miss Meade's, *The O'Donnels of Inchfawn*, thoroughly Irish and not overdrawn.

A. If you want a book for your lads, Manville Fenn's *Devon Boys* (Blackie), is capital and spirited. Indeed, both Manville Fenn's and Henley's may all be safely used for boy literature—gentle or simple. They are published some by Nelson, some more by Blackie.

S. Before all these I meant to ask you about Mrs. Jerome Mercier's book, *The Story of Salvation* (Rivington).

A. It is a very admirable deep-thinking book, excellent in its design of showing educated girls how to study the Bible. One or two things I regret, i.e. the taking Dean Stanley so much as her guide in the Old Testament. Dr. Edersheim, though much less

brilliant, is safer. I do not understand the treating the sun and moon standing still as though the extract from the old poem might be untrustworthy. I wish, instead of casting a slur on it, she had suggested the explanation borne out by the Hebrew, that the call to the sun to stand still, really was 'be silent,'—namely, continue concealed by the clouds of the great hail-storm that was doing so much damage to the flying enemy. And again, there is an explaining away of Saul's evil spirit, instead of showing that his indulged passions did really 'give place to the devil;' but as one of the girls of the conversation is supposed to live with sceptical people, perhaps it is in concession to her, though an unwise one. Nor should Samuel be pronounced unhesitatingly no Levite, when the Book of Chronicles makes him a Kohathite; and this perfectly agrees with his mother's gift of sacred song, and his functions at the tabernacle. Also to say that Luther put forth the full truth about justification by faith is a dangerous thing. There is once, too, a confusion between the Cross and Crucifix. Haman was assuredly not hanged on the latter! These are, however, very slight blemishes in a very valuable book, showing the way to real study of the Holy Word, and entering well on some popular difficulties, as well as showing in what spirit they should be met.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE 'MONTHLY PACKET.'

My Dear ——

Will you kindly grant me space to tell your readers of an admirable Society which was formed sixteen years ago, but which is scarcely so widely known as it deserves to be?

It is called the 'Guild of Friends of the Infirm in Mind,' and its object is to give help of various kinds to the insane; the means proposed for this being as follows:—

1. Intercessory Prayer.
2. Visits to friendless patients in Asylums, in conformity with the regulations of the establishment.
3. Correspondence by post.
4. Seeking situations for convalescents.
5. Promoting Convalescent Homes for temporary rest after mental illness.
6. Maintaining friendly intercourse with discharged patients.
7. Recommending efficient attendants.

Members are not, however, *bound* to give assistance in any one of these ways, except the first (much less in *all*), the conditions of membership being merely 'communion with the Church of England, and willingness to promote the objects of the Association by prayer and help, according to opportunity.' The following beautiful prayer is suggested for frequent use, and a copy of it supplied to each Member—

'O Blessed Lord, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort, we commend to Thy Fatherly goodness all those who are anyways afflicted or distressed in mind: cheer the melancholy; restore hope to the hopeless; protect the unconscious; calm the violent; suffer them not to do harm to themselves, or others, and let no one do injury to them; dispel all vain delusions; confirm the health of the recovering; comfort the sick; receive the spirits of the dying; lay not to their charge whatever evil any of them may say or do in time of their affliction; bless the endeavours of all who labour and pray on behalf of the afflicted in mind; and bring us all to Thine everlasting kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.'

Further particulars regarding the Association will be gladly given by the Warden, the Rev. Henry Hawkins, Chaplain's House, Colney Hatch, N. No annual subscription is required, but a contribution of one shilling towards expenses of printing, postage, etc., is payable on

Membership. The Bishop of London is the President, and the Bishop of Bedford and the Rector of Friern Barnet, Vice-Presidents.

As a matter of fact the lives of patients in various asylums have been soothed and cheered by Members of this Society, who, by their kindly visits or letters, and gifts of flowers, Christmas cards, etc., have brought home to many forlorn sufferers the sense of *being still cared for*. Those only who know something of the sense of abandonment which prevails among a large proportion of mental patients when cut off from their relations, can fully estimate what a boon this is; but many philanthropists—such as the late Lord Shaftesbury, who, for more than half a century, was Chairman of the Lunacy Commission—have felt drawn to ameliorate their condition by having been in some way witnesses of their sufferings.

Mr. Hawkins is very anxious that a Sisterhood should be formed which should take for its especial work ministrations to the infirm in mind, and it would be a most fitting thing if such a community were to grow out of this useful Guild, and become as it were its nucleus. He does not propose that the Sisters should actually have the charge of lunatics—though this is undertaken by some communities abroad—but that they should receive convalescents, should train attendants, and assist the mentally afflicted in some of the ways indicated above.

There is no such Sisterhood existing in the English Church; nor, among the many Convalescent Homes in our land, is there (so far as I know) a single one which is specially designed for patients recovering from mental derangement.

May God put it into the hearts of some of us to supply this need

Ever yours, etc.,
FLORENCE WILFORD.

P.S.—The 'After Care Society' (distinct from the Guild), interests itself in the welfare of poor and friendless female convalescents discharged from Lunatic Asylums. President, Earl of Meath. Secretary, H. T. Roxby, Esq., Emblewood, Osbaldeston Road, N.

A FRENCH TOWN IN TIME OF TROUBLE.

EARLY in the spring of 1871, a few days after the Treaty of Peace had been signed between France and Germany; when the German army had evacuated Versailles and the forts on the south and west of Paris, and had retired to St. Denis and the country on the north and east of the city; when the Commune in Paris, which had been in constant effervescence since the beginning of the siege, had, within the last few days, broken out in open rebellion against the Government lately established under M. Thiers, business obliged the writer to proceed to Versailles.

Great excitement had been caused in London the day before at the news which had come from Paris. The Insurgents had taken possession of the Hôtel de Ville, refusing to give up the guns which had been used at Montmartre against the Germans, and had murdered Generals Thomas and Le Comte. No one knew what might happen next, and we were warned, both at the Foreign Office and by the French Consul, not to attempt to enter Paris. Warnings, however, are vain where necessity exists, and we started on the journey, not knowing very well what we should have to encounter before we reached our destination, but finding it hard to believe that there could be any difficulty in following the usual route through Paris to Versailles.

The world had got used to exciting news, owing to the stirring events of the past year, when a great nation had been humbled to the dust in a few short months, and the Sovereign, whose slightest word touching upon European affairs had, for twenty years past, been flashed far and wide as that of an arbiter for peace or war,—was a prisoner, his family exiles, his armies defeated and scattered. But peace had come at last; the war was over. France, crushed and defeated, and with an enormous indemnification before her, might breathe again, when came the sudden announcement that there were those in the conquered, agonised, ruined country, still lying under the heel of the conqueror, who could be so lost to all sense of patriotism and self-interest, as to threaten to tear each other to pieces within the very sight of their triumphant enemies.

With the first step of the journey, however, came courage, and soon positive enjoyment in the prospect of the enterprise. A calm sea, a quick passage in an almost empty boat—but this last was to be expected after the gloomy anticipations in London—and now the arrival at the pier at Calais, where passports were asked for and closely examined, an unusual thing of late years, and therefore the

first reminder that, on leaving the steamer we had left behind the settled routine to which we have got so generally accustomed.

Then to the station; all as usual, except that there are fewer people about, and the officials less voluble and lively. Certainly at the restaurant (the only one to be found on the line, the Prussians, we are told, having made such things impossible,) the refreshments are more unpalatable than usual,—which is saying much.

And now away we steam into the country—into France; but no longer sunny, prosperous, glorious France—no longer the arbiter of Europe; her army, her generals, no longer the first in the world. Alas, since she claimed to be such, oceans of blood have flowed, and defeat, disaster, and ruin followed each other in such quick succession, that the events of years seem to have been crowded into the space of eight months.

There is nothing unusual to be seen as yet, however, as the train glides swiftly across the country under bright sunshine, the fields right and left of us all under cultivation, and ready for the coming season. The men in blouses are working in the fields; the white-capped women and children stand at the low red-tiled cottage doors, gazing at the train, as we have so often seen them; only to-day to our eyes there seems the shadow of a calamity upon all. From those quiet cottages must have come some of the thousands now lying in the heaped-up graves of Gravelotte and Sédan. It seems but yesterday that there must have come to those labourers in the fields the news of some great battle and disaster. Those white-capped women and children must have lost husbands, sons, and brothers; and as we make our way with flying speed through the country, pictures rise up before us, and the mind forms itself into a retrospect of a past so recent, and of events now become historical.

Who does not remember when the summer of last year was beginning to wane, and the two great nations of France and Prussia had been for weeks endeavouring to outwit each other, and each to force upon the other the odium of declaring war, that at last, France threw down the gauntlet, and the tremendous game began, and 'furious Frank and fiery Hun' met in deadly conflict?

It seemed but the work of a few hours when the world heard of great armies hurrying to the frontier. The German legions came pouring down to the Rhine; the newspapers told of enthusiastic multitudes in Paris shouting 'à Berlin'—and extravagant excitement and delight followed when it was known that the Emperor and the Prince Imperial were gone to join the army at Metz.

> 'Then shook the hills with thunder riven;
> Then rushed the steed, to battle driven;
> And louder than the bolts of Heaven
> Far flashed the red artillery.'

The first news telegraphed to Paris was that of a 'victory' and of the 'few drops of blood' at Saarbrouck. Awful and ominous

words, preceding the thunderstorm which so soon followed. It is a short-lived triumph, and the *last*, for Wissembourg, Wörth, Gravelotte, and Sédan follow in quick succession, with overwhelming disaster on all sides, and, exasperated with disappointment, the 'many-headed monster thing'—the mob of Paris—rise and demand the immediate return of the Emperor, riotously parading the streets with the tricolour; and while the storm is at its height, all Europe is electrified with the news that the Emperor is a prisoner, the Empress and her son fugitives, and the Empire itself crumbles in a few hours to the ground in ruins; and this followed by confusion, on all sides and in all quarters (as, indeed, how could it be otherwise), recrimination and denouncement, and then a pause, and the Republic is proclaimed, with Count Palikao at its head.

And the while, slowly but surely, the iron band is drawn round Paris, and that awful winter begins, the sorrows, the sufferings, and the humiliations of which are still heavy on the hearts of all.

Who cannot recall the picture presented by the doomed city—once the very ideal of prosperity, of gaiety, of luxury, the 'joyous city'—which last winter presented? A circle of fire and sword directed against her night and day; deep snow lying upon her like a shroud, blackened with smoke, and stained, alas, how often, with blood; and to render the humiliation greater, a city divided against itself.

Who does not remember the sufferings which gained the sympathy of all—borne so often with noble patience—the desperate attempts to communicate with the outer world, and with friends and relations who had been divided and scattered by the war—the balloons carrying would-be negotiators; the 'Victor Hugo,' with M. Gambetta, who started on his vain errand on the 16th of October; the little winged messengers who carried the 'pigeon post' so faithfully, and that pitiful column seen from time to time in the *Times* newspaper, assuring 'Henri' that his mother was out of danger, or, alas, the reverse, or that 'Marie' informs her husband that she is well, and that her children 'embrace their father?'

Now and again desperate sorties are organised, distinguished in many cases by instances of the most daring courage, but all having the same ending, defeat with appalling loss—all tending to the fast approaching end, victory to the inexorable foe—till at last, distracted by internal struggles, with rebellion and disorder within the walls, worn out and starved, battered by shot and shell, with St. Cloud reduced to ashes, and the once beautiful environs in ruins, the city capitulates, an enormous indemnity is exacted, and on the first of March, 30,000 Germans enter Paris as victors, and take up their quarters in the Champs Elysées for three days, and leave on the 4th of March, shouting 'à Berlin,' as they leave the city by the Arc de Triomphe. It is the third time within the century that a hostile army has entered Paris, and both times, it is bitterly remembered

the result of the Imperial rule of a Buonaparte. The people, however, do not despond, peace is signed; the indemnity is large, but France is rich, and it will be her watchword, her hope, that she too, may, in some *not* far distant future, shout 'à Berlin.'

And now, to complicate all difficulties, to add to every humiliation, arises the hydra-headed monster, the skeleton, with its scarlet cap, red-handed, cruel and lawless, the Red Republic, calling itself the Commune, which has been the sharpest thorn in the side of the distracted Government through all the trials of the winter and of the siege.

With the recollection of the long list of disaster and defeat, rendered more vivid by the sight of the country through which we passed, bright in its spring array, the train reached Abbeville; and there for the first time we were brought face to face with soldiers—if we could call those poorly clad, undersized boys, who were crowding the station, by that name—soldiers, however, they were, and as they lounged awkwardly about the platform, we observed two officers, evidently of some rank, pass through the midst of them, but we saw no salute, nor any notice taken of their superiors by the men. We felt a tender pity for them, however, though they were but a party of recruits, and had seen no service, remembering that they were French, with whom so much of our sympathy had of late been enlisted, for had they not been overwhelmed with misfortune, and who does not feel pity for the 'one that is down?'

We were about to receive a shock, however, for on the other side of the station, only separated from our poor recruits by the line of rails, stood a throng of ten or twelve men, upright, broad, with fair round faces and fair hair—they had the blue uniform and helmet surmounted with the Prussian eagle, and were gazing placidly across the line. They looked very good-natured, very stolid and very quiet; but it was a sensation, indeed, to feel that we saw before us, for the first time, the invincible Germans, the conquerers of France. Alas, in that first sight we seemed to read the whole story.

On swept the train, and now we passed into a new order of things; the fields had a less cultivated appearance, the villages a more desolate look, more and more German soldiers thronged the stations, till, just before reaching Amiens, the train slackened and passed slowly over broken ground, and over piers and arches but lately rebuilt—where, in fact, till the last few days, all had been ruin.

At Amiens the large station was filled with Prussian troops, increasing in numbers as we entered the town, to find rooms for the night. There was difficulty in this, however, for 'les Prussiens' filled every hotel. *One* room was, however, acquired; but to describe what that room was, is to recall what had better be left in oblivion. We asked at what hour was the table d'hôte? There was no such thing at any hotel in the town. MM. les Prussiens had their own table at their own hour, and we could have something to eat upstairs,

when they had finished; and we fled from the stuffy atmosphere—in which stale smoke and the smell of brandy struggled for the mastery, and from the sound of loud voices, and the clanking of swords and spurs, which came from every room, and clattered down every stair—into the town, where every other man we met was a German soldier, and on every door were the chalk marks, so soon to be familiar wherever we went, denoting the number of men to be billeted in that house.

In the town, there seemed a general gloom, the few people in the streets who were not in Prussian uniform all looked grave and preoccupied, and were almost all in black.

The Germans, who were in fact everywhere, seemed perfectly good-humoured and orderly; but they were in complete possession of the place, and in our inexperience of such a state of things, we wondered, beholding on all sides the signs of conquest, and the inevitable thraldom in which the inhabitants were living, whether they could for a moment forget the pain and humiliation of such a position.

Two little scenes, commonplace enough in themselves, gave us a moment's relief from the prevailing gloomy associations. In one of the quiet streets leading to the Cathedral, a door opened in the high whitewashed wall, and a bright-looking young woman came out, and stood talking gaily to a party of friends in a country cart, who seemed just about to depart. The evening sunshine lit up the background, seen through the open door, of spring greenery, and a pretty garden, and the little company kissed their hands, and cried cheerfully 'au revoir,' and we were conscious of a moment's surprise and pleasure, that any one in Amiens was free to talk and laugh, and that any one should have the heart to do it.

We came, in the course of the walk, upon a little public square and garden, where were a few benches, and some quiet people enjoying the evening air, and where some children had congregated to play. Among them was a good-natured German soldier, and he and the children were at high romps together. The children were dancing round him in shrieks of laughter, and the soldier was allowing himself to be caught, and clambered upon, and dragged hither and thither, with the utmost good-humour and enjoyment; but I do not think the silent lookers-on on the benches much enjoyed the sport.

How still and solemn seemed the beautiful Cathedral; how calm and restful the half hour we spent within, where the sunset came softly through the pearly, rainbow-tinted windows, and where the silence was made more profound by contrast to the din and stir without.

We had been warned over night to be early at the station, as it was impossible to reckon on what hour the trains would start for Paris, and on our arrival, before it was fairly daylight, we found the platform crowded, partly by the ubiquitous Prussians, and partly by an excited multitude, many of whom had arrived from Paris during the

night. It was the first time we had heard the revolt of the Communists against the Government alluded to—'Les Prussiens, les Prussiens,' being the one subject uppermost in the minds of all—the galling yoke now on their necks.

This morning, among the excited crowd, sitting grave and silent in their black robes and white caps, were four Sisters of Charity, and from them we heard that they had left Paris the evening before, and they were especially earnest in their recommendations not to enter the city, if it was possible to avoid doing so. There had been fighting in the streets—a 'massacre' in the Place Vendôme—no one could say what might happen at any hour, all might be at the mercy of the Commune, and it was quite possible that once within the walls there would be some difficulty in getting out again, and we resolved to take their advice and to avoid Paris altogether, and to reach Versailles by Rouen, making our way thither with an enormous body of German soldiers.

There we found repeated the same state of things as at Amiens. In that grey old French town, being on the *rive droite*, the German legions again predominated. We looked up a dark narrow street, and the only light was that reflected from the spikes on the helmets, and from the bayonets of a regiment which was itself indistinct in the gloom; in the windows of every tavern sat or stood Prussian officers—Prussian soldiers passed in and out of the shops, and standing in groups at every corner were the stolid, burly, good-natured figures and faces in the blue uniform.

In the Place Ouen, in front of that most beautiful of the two beautiful cathedral churches of Rouen, were several regiments drawn up, standing in dark masses like square blocks, the edges fretted with the glint of spikes and bayonets, like a gold and silver fringe.

Two bands played alternately, and most beautiful music they made; and within the solemn gloom of the Cathedral, which we entered, the sound came fitfully, echoing in the arches over our heads. In that solemn temple, hung with black throughout, and peopled by a few silent kneeling figures, there seemed a sudden hush, calling the thoughts back from the glories, to the sorrows and humiliations of war.

On the walls was posted the recent *mandement* of Archbishop Bonnechose to his flock. With the full weight of their terrible situation on our minds, and with the keenest sympathy for the fallen nation whom it addressed, we read the opening words: '*Dans les circonstances malheureuses où nous sommes*,' it said, '*nous ne pouvons vous parler que de vos souffrances—de tous côtés, l'humiliation, la ruine, la désolation, et les gouffres béants d'une misère sans bornes, et sans fond.*' Here, at least, we find no self-deception, no shrinking from the truth. The whole address is admirable, and our pity was no less deep because it touched so boldly upon the crimes and weaknesses which had helped to bring about the suffering.

After recapitulating the events which had led to such almost

unprecedented misfortunes, the Archbishop inveighed against the lawlessness, miscalled liberty, which made all government impossible —the luxury, the idleness, and lack of noble purpose, and the irreligion which had undermined all classes of society. All true, and all awful in its truth; but is there no other nation besides France against whom some such accusations might be brought, and what people among us is there who could dare to say to her, when visited by the Nemesis of punishment, 'Stand aside, for I am holier than thou.'

An hour later we were again steaming away into the country, by this time lying under the brightest afternoon sunshine, with the Seine sparkling in the light, and the hills on the northern bank just touched with the colour of the coming spring.

We left the train at Poissy, in order to make our way, according to the advice we had received, across to Versailles by St. Germain; but on arriving at Poissy there were no carriages or horses to be had.

All usual arrangements had broken down since the war, and the outbreak in Paris had shaken what remained of the existing state of things. The last few days there had been a rush out of Paris by thousands who had only just returned to their homes; and every carriage and horse for miles round had been engaged. There was nothing to be done but to wait patiently till the break which we were told would shortly return, would be available to take us as far as St. Germain.

It was a strange two hours that we spent at the door of the wretched hotel at Poissy, sitting on the luggage in the street, in preference to the dirty stuffiness within—the darkness increasing, and the people gathering round in groups, wondering and talking, all on the same subject of the outbreak in Paris; but in strangely quiet tones, and with none of the excitement usual in French people on the least emergency. There seemed a feeling of disappointment and depression on all. If we asked a question, a shrug of the shoulders, with an indignant expression of contempt for the authors of the calamity, was all the answer we received.

The break came at last and was speedily filled; for others besides ourselves were waiting for some means of conveyance. Two young French ladies and an old peasant woman, with a yellow handkerchief on her head and in a peasant's dress, whom the other travellers addressed as *ma mère*, and whom they all treated with the respect and consideration which is usual in France towards all old people—and a personage who seemed to know a great deal about the arrest of M. Rouher, which had taken place at Boulogne that morning, but who was mysterious as to himself, and as to the place to which he was bound, or the object of his journey—made up the party which started through the gathering darkness along the straight level road of the forest.

I have only misty recollections of those two hours. Two days of exciting travel and an almost sleepless night, caused an overpowering

drowsiness; but the ladies' voices were highly pitched, and though they were mingled with half-waking dreams, one had no option as to hearing what they said.

Les Prussiens were of course the topic; no barbarities were spoken of, no violence or ill-usage, to be called such; but with what unsparing tongues they lashed at the weaknesses, the stupidity, the *grossièreté* of their enemies, no English pen can relate. 'Cognac, cognac, toujours cognac,' they said.

One of the ladies had had ten of the enemy quartered in her house all the winter. She had on their arrival placed all her spare rooms at their disposal, keeping only her private rooms for her own use, and hoping to preserve them from the desecration of the conquerors. '*Ouvrez toutes vos chambres, madame,*' was the command, and the poor lady could not but obey; and they remained, to overwork her carriage horses, to wipe their pens on her satin curtains, and to spoil her carpets; and, finally and hardest to bear of all, to win the hearts of the children of the house by their good nature, and to teach them to speak German!

At St. Germain came another stoppage, for a second carriage had to be sought out and waited for during a miserable hour of semi-consciousness [and overwhelming sleep at an hotel where the mistress seemed to be too tired and dispirited to care what we did, and where we waited in a room where eating was going on, and when two men in blouses began to quarrel as to whether the commune had *pillé* or not, thereby causing one to accuse the other of being an *insurgé* himself, and creating such a storm of fury on both sides, as seemed to those unaccustomed to French habits, that nothing but instant combat could appease.

Through pitch darkness, at last Versailles was reached, and then we were thoroughly roused to realise the actual state of affairs. Though nearly midnight, the streets of the usually dull old town were densely crowded with people, most of them homeless, having fled in thousands from Paris to the nearest shelter, under the Government formed by M. Thiers—wandering from house to house in search of a lodging or even a bed; groups consisting in many cases of parents and children, servants, and even household goods. And as the night drew on, and we thankfully reached our own home in the immediate suburbs, we tried to realise that this was indeed Versailles, and that within twelve miles of us was Paris, lately besieged, and suffering from an enemy still massed in thousands close beside her, while within the walls was an armed and furious mob in open rebellion—all the landmarks of society disappearing, and an army but lately scattered and imprisoned, gathering from all parts to defend France against herself.

Versailles presented a novel appearance the next morning to eyes accustomed to the usual condition of things—the town being generally almost deserted, except by a quiet, and with few exceptions, middle-class population, since the days immediately before the first Revolu-

Ambulance Corps (and then employed by the Mansion House Committee in distribution of its funds). He had got into Paris—as the driver of one of the omnibuses which were still allowed, under strict surveillance, to cross the barrier—in the hope of being allowed to bring out a large consignment of seed corn which had been warehoused there when the siege was raised, and he was granted an audience with this brilliant member of the *Comité*, whom he found very drunk, and weeping over the ill-treatment of his friends, alternately shaking hands with his visitor, and wiping his eyes with the sleeve of his very dirty shirt.

Meantime the Insurgents were shouting 'à Versailles,' and asserting their intention of coming to take possession of the Assembly, throwing the Deputies out of the window, or carrying them in triumph back to Paris; which threat threw the poor Deputies themselves into great alarm, and they were calling to their defence, with the utmost energy, the scattered remains of the French army. Great opportunity had been already lost, in not at once attacking in Paris the Insurgents who were now actively organising their forces, and making use of the fortifications used in the late war.

M. Thiers, in whose policy no one seemed hitherto to have much faith, declared that he was 'master of the situation,' but no one saw in what this security consisted; and there was great suspicion as to the loyalty of the army itself, and whether, in the event of the Insurgents coming out of Paris in strength, the army may not fraternise with them, and establish a veritable reign of terror over us all. The Assembly itself was composed of deputies professing every shade of opinion; from those who hardly disguised their sympathy with the Commune, to the known, if not openly declared adherents of Henri V., and only the day before there had been a meeting of the 'Fusionists,' who advocated a coalition between the Orleanists and the Legitimists.

And, meantime, like a dark cloud on the horizon, the German army looked on; and as not a penny of the war indemnification of 10 milliards had been paid, it was no wonder that there were rumours that their patience was likely to be exhausted, and that the intervention of Prussia to save the Government, unequal to the task of saving itself, would add one more to the many bitter drops prepared for France. And, as if indifferent to all the gloom and perplexity, spring was advancing fast, and on one of the first spring days we were glad to forget for awhile the distractions and anxieties of the time, and to spend an afternoon in the gardens of the Château, to stroll along the alleys and avenues, and to visit our favourite groups, in marble and bronze, the masterpieces of Guérin and Girardon, and especially the magnificent bronzes of the Kellers;—all of which we rejoiced to find had suffered no injury from the Germans.

There, in front of the Château, stood our two favourite white marble sphinxes, on which are seated, in beautiful contrast, black bronze figures. The fourteen smaller fountains, tazza, supported by

lovely groups of children, which stand each side of the broad walk leading down to the *Pièce des Dragon*, were also untouched.

It was too soon for the orange-trees to be brought out from their winter quarters; but we were glad to hear that these beautiful and historical trees, some of which date from the days of Francis I., had not suffered.

The natural charms, too, of these beautiful gardens were reviving, after an unusually hard winter. Wild violets in the *bosquets* were beginning to scent the air, and green leaves to burst in the avenues.

The perfect quiet of the gardens at this time, tenanted as they were only by a few strolling figures like ourselves, was indeed in strange contrast to the turmoil in the town. One could easily fall into a dream of the days gone by, and of the kings and queens, the soldiers and statesmen, who for nearly two hundred years ruled in Versailles, and made the stately palace and its surroundings a scene of the most extravagant luxury and festivity. A Nemesis has indeed arisen since those days; and though the beauty and the grandeur always strike one afresh, there is always to me a melancholy and a desolation about them which, under the existing circumstances, seemed to have reached a climax.

It is difficult to conceive a scene more fitted than the palace and gardens of Versailles for the display of the splendid pageantry of such a Court as that of France in the 18th century. Since that time, when it ceased to be a royal residence, it has still been a witness to the shifting fortunes of the rulers of France. Fêtes and celebrations, civic and military, have on various occasions brought back from time to time a few short hours of former magnificence; but as a rule the splendid palace stands silent and deserted, but for the crowd of sightseers who stray through its desolate chambers, to wonder at their richness and grace, and it may be to moralise on the grandeur, the sins, and the sorrows of a fallen race, and upon that awful punishment of the sins of the fathers upon the children—a punishment which the virtues of Louis XVI., and the noble and beautiful character of his Queen, were powerless to avert. One of the greatest fêtes celebrated at Versailles was in the days of its chief splendour, on the occasion of the marriage of Marie Antoinette; the last was the grand ball given in 1855, by the Emperor and Empress, to our own Queen Victoria.

March 30th.—There is great excitement in the town to-day, the Insurgents have cut the line of railway which leads directly from this to the St. Lazare Station in Paris, and our usually noisy station close by is silent and empty, with only the usual National Guard at the gate, and the newspaper woman under her umbrella, of whom we daily buy a 'Gaulois,' or a 'Liberté' as we pass, notwithstanding that not one word of truth as to the present state of affairs is to be found in any of the papers. A piece of news which is true, however, gives great satisfaction.

M. Rampont, the Chief of the Postal Administration, has, in defiance of the Commune, removed to Versailles with his whole staff, his *caisse*, and several millions of *timbres*. This is a great blow to the cowardly *amis de l'ordre* in the city, who had not courage to take up arms against the Insurgents at the beginning, and who find themselves now cut off from all communication from without.

One of the *jeunes gens de famille* now in Versailles (one of those who, with the clergy and the Sisters of Charity, are alone said to have behaved with unswerving courage and patriotism during the last six months of misfortune), has been doing all he can to rouse the spirit of the Government, and to induce them to take the army with a dash into Paris without an hour's delay; but his influence and courage are alike disregarded, and the country struggles on, with Generals without skill, and Statesmen without courage, in the hour of her deepest need.

And in the midst of this weakness and incapacity on one side, and of turmoil and excitement on the other, and also of some degree of trepidation as to ourselves, when we think of the short twelve miles which separates us from the raging multitude in Paris, we look across the road and watch with a feeling of relief and satisfaction the actions of our opposite neighbour, whose house stands, like our own, in a garden just within the *octroi* of the road leading to St. Cloud, and, therefore, we remember with some anxiety, one of the roads which lead directly to and from Paris!

Both houses are on the confines of the wood of 'Fausse Repose.'* Our opposite neighbour has taken refuge from the troubles of his country in the cultivation of his peas, and the arrangement of his *terre* generally, of about half an acre, all surrounded by those ugly plaster and white-washed walls which disfigure all the suburban houses in France.

Our neighbour is a neatly-dressed little man, who might have stood for the portrait of dear, brave, and absurd M. Fontaine, in that charming book 'The Village on the Cliff—' he is so important, so fussy, and so busy; and he never ceases his work from morning till night, quite happy in his apron and shirt-sleeves, directing, ordering and working, watering his lettuces, catching slugs among his cucumbers with apparent indifference to the continual rattle and noise of artillery waggons, '*Equipages Militaires*,' and other distracting sounds of which Versailles is full. This engrossing labour on his part gives us confidence. Versailles has to-day been full of the greatest excitement, with rumours flying about from hour to hour, and especially a warning that there would be fighting on

* To account for this grammatical error, it is to be remarked that the name of the steep wooded hill on the north-east of Versailles is derived from the fact, that the country lying round Versailles and St. Germain was formerly royal hunting ground. As a rule all the terms used in 'Vénerie' were applied in the feminine, as in this case. 'Fausse repose' denotes a place which could be taken advantage of as a shelter by the deer when hard pressed.

Sunday. Everything seems in a state of fever except M. Fontaine, and there is a feeling of safety in watching him. Would he be so busy sowing his beans, and shading his lettuce plants if there was really a chance of the Insurgents carrying out their declared intention of marching out upon Versailles 60,000 strong, and taking possession of us all? and would he be superintending with such interest the building of that wonderful pagoda—which has also the look of a Swiss cottage, but which is in reality a stable and coach-house—if the army were indeed likely to fraternise with the Insurgents?

Palm Sunday.—At three o'clock this morning the town was ringing with the sound of drums, trumpets, and bugles, coming from every quarter of the town, the army was moving out towards Paris, and the hour was come which would at once test the loyalty of the troops, on whom depended the safety of the Government, and, indeed, of France. Had the Insurgents triumphed for an hour, Lyons, Marseilles, and most of the large towns, would have burst into a blaze. All would certainly have been over at Versailles, and we should have been at the mercy of such men as Pyat, Flourens, Henri, and the rest, and of 'Generals' Cluseret and Bergeret, who lead the Insurgents.

The whole day long the road by our house was filled with an endless succession of troops, long lines of artillery, and baggage waggons, going out towards Paris, while the sitting of the Chamber was pronounced to be permanent.

Later in the day it was with inexpressible thankfulness that we heard that the doubt of the loyalty of the army had been dispelled. The army of the Commune had kept its promise, and had come out in three enormous columns from the whole western side of Paris, extending from Courbevoie on the north, to Vanves, Issy, and Châtillon on the south. The Government troops had behaved well; the fighting had been desperate, especially on the Bridge of Neuilly; but the Insurgents had been driven back at all points, and so far, Versailles was safe.

As we were returning homewards through the Avenue de la Reine, a group of tired horses and dismounted cavalry, at the door of one of the generals who lived in the Avenue, showed that news had come. We learned that the body of poor M. Pasquier, the army surgeon, had been brought in. He had been killed among the first, in the encounter with the Insurgents at Neuilly.

April 4th.—Yesterday morning the forts between this and Paris began firing; the wind carried the sound distinctly, and continuing from early morning almost the whole day, had a depressing effect. One never loses the sense of what that heavy *thud*, like a muffled blow, means. For many weeks during the winter that sound never ceased, and we did not wonder, when we were told that many old and sick people had died from no other cause than this constant trial

to the nerves. The town begins to show signs of the nearness of the fighting. The white flag, with the ominous red cross, is constantly seen flying, now from the roof of a carriage bearing some member of the ambulance corps to the front; now on the long covered carts, always giving one a shock when one sees them making their way to the military hospital in the Château; and now and then is seen that still sadder sight, the litter, borne by men, carrying some poor sufferer, who can bear no rougher means of conveyance, or one who is beyond all suffering. Several of our friends are taking up the occupation of the last winter, and have entered again on their duties in the hospital. There is no need of further help. The more trying task of going out to search for the living among the dead has been undertaken by the Sisters of Mercy, in whom is placed the utmost confidence—nothing, indeed, can exceed the courage and devotion of these excellent women.

On the morning of April 5th I went early to the St. Louis quarter of the town, and was attracted by an *affiche* posted in the Boulevards, stating that the fort of Châtillon had been taken in the night with 1500 of the Insurgents, ending with the usual announcement that Paris itself would be entered immediately; but this is said so often, not only officially, but by every French man or woman whom we meet, that we can put no confidence in the assertion.

The *Place d'Armes* was this morning crowded as usual to excess, and dusty to suffocation. Some enormous siege-guns have arrived from Brest, and we noticed several mitrailleuses, venomous-looking things, with mouths tied up in oilcloth, and a sort of tail, in the shape of a handle behind. Then into the *Rue Satory*, which, leading up to the *Plaine*, is always so full of soldiers that it is like walking through an armed multitude.

Coming out of St. Louis itself, where the shade and silence is grateful after the noise and glare of the streets, the noise and excitement is doubled—a shouting, running crowd, then a detachment of *Chasseurs d'Afrique*, with their light blue uniforms and grey horses, and in the midst, closely surrounded by an excited multitude, a crowd of strange, wild-looking, bare-headed men, some wearing tattered uniforms, some red and blue garibaldis, and all covered with dust, with haggard desperate-looking faces, and in many cases with long hair and beards. They were 800 of the Communists, who had been taken at Châtillon, and were being escorted, under a strong guard, up to the camp at Satory.

Miserable *égarés* they appeared, and it seemed like looking at some wild desperate creatures, who had been caught in a trap and beaten.

Two *cantinières* were among the prisoners—one of them had been decorated during the Prussian war—and as she passed along with the rest, a woman in the crowd, one of those Frenchwomen who seem to lose all feeling and humanity under excitement, rushed forward and violently tore the medal from the front of her dress.

The crowd were shouting 'Vinoy, Vinoy!'—the General under whose command the fort had been taken, and who, for the time, is the most popular with the army—and, catching up handfuls of dust, threw it at the prisoners as they were hurried by; but the soldiers prevented further outrage. I shall always remember that flock of driven, exasperated-looking men as one of the most painful sights I ever looked upon.

It was not till the next day that we heard of the seizing and imprisonment of the Archbishop of Paris, and of the Abbé Duquerry, Curé of the Madeleine, a man of the most saintly character, with thirty or forty of the clergy, as hostages; the Commune declaring that for every one of their own people who were shot, three lives of the clergy would be sacrificed.

Leaving the heated crowded streets, I mounted the grand flight of steps leading up from the Orangery, whose magnificent proportions seem to dwarf the houses round, to rest and recover under the trees in the Gardens, and, passing out some time afterwards, I found the *Cour de Maroc* crowded with people; this, and the top of the *Rue des Réservoirs* is the promenade of all Versailles, the entrance to the Assembly being in the former. This afternoon, regiment after regiment was pouring out of the *Place d'Armes* into the *Rue du Roi*, which was filled like a broad river with troops from end to end, marching out towards Paris. Long lines of cavalry and infantry, trains of artillery, gay colours, strains of music, followed each other in a flood, and filed away in the distance; but there was no enthusiasm, no anticipations of triumph. Those who looked on were silent and depressed. It was not Prussians they were going to fight and conquer, but Frenchmen—Paris.

It would seem impossible that an army of Insurgents, however desperate and numerous—they are said to number 200,000 within the walls—should be able to cut their way through the masses of troops, now between this and Paris, unless, as we heard a French officer say the other day, all the powers of evil are in league against them. We have been much interested in the officer above named, who is the son-in-law of one of our friends in Versailles. M. le Capitaine P. has just returned from Germany, where he has been imprisoned since the battle of Sédan. He was in all three of those awful disasters—Sédan, Gravelotte, and Wörth; and his silence and the gravity of his demeanour speak for themselves. One day he spoke of these calamities with the deepest feeling, and described a scene, one of the saddest, comparatively speaking, of that sad time. He was passing along a road, after one of these battles, with the remains of his squadron, when he came upon a party of fugitives, whose carriage, covered with mud, and with exhausted horses, was standing by the roadside. The party consisted of two or three of the Emperor's trusted servants, escorting the Prince Imperial in his flight towards the coast to join his mother. The poor boy, deadly

pale, and looking as if he had not taken off his clothes for days, was dipping his handkerchief in a puddle by the roadside to wash his hands, while his companions were urging him back to the carriage.

The last time our friend had seen the Prince had been some months before, when he had been the adored heir to a throne, and had been put forward by the Emperor and Empress to acknowledge the acclamations of the crowd, on the occasion of some great military display at the Tuileries. Let us hope that there were days in the short life which followed, in free and hospitable England, when naturally high spirits, youth, and the possession of many friends, obliterated the recollection of those days in the memory of one almost a child, though they may have foreshadowed that still darker hour, which was happily hidden from him in the future.

Good Friday.—This has been a day of gloom and apprehension to all. The fighting has never ceased since Sunday, and though the troops are firm, the loss has been terrible, especially at the bridge of Neuilly, and where, we are told, the struggle was more severe and the loss greater than at any time during the Prussian occupation. In the evening we went to the church of Notre Dame to hear the sermon, and the whole time the sound of heavy firing from Valérien, Puteaux, and Neuilly was heard above the voice of the preacher; each shock seeming to strike upon the high roof and shake the glazed windows, and all rendered more striking by the audible weeping of some of the congregation.

And now while the time flies apace, the days grow longer, giving more and more time to the Insurgents to organise their undisciplined troops, and to strengthen their defences, and people are losing faith in the promises of M. Thiers, and the hope of speedily entering Paris—for the army is still without, the Archbishop and clergy are still hostages, and all business, all commercial enterprise, is at a standstill; there are even rumours of a second siege. The Prussians, meanwhile, keep silent watch from the forts on the north and east, jealously warding off every encroachment from either side; but ready at any time to interfere, should their own advantage be for a moment threatened.

And now, the day is fast approaching, when me must turn our backs upon Versailles, and upon unhappy, distracted France. We cannot enter Paris; and the lawyer whom we intended to see, and in whose hands we hoped to leave left some affairs, has, we understand, himself left the city. Things seem at a standstill, and the events of each day are but repeated—there is little to record, unless it is to tell of two days, pleasant in themselves, in the midst of gloomy surroundings, when we enjoyed the lovely spring weather in the environs, especially beautiful at this season, when Paris and its neighbourhood seem to stand knee-deep in flowers.

One bright sunny afternoon we spent at the Petit Trianon, where

was to be seen at that time the almost priceless collection of furniture of the Louis XVI. period, which had been used by Marie Antoinette when she came to spend a few days there. The beautiful cabinets—especially one, almost invaluable, inlaid with plaques of Wedgewood ware—the tables and chairs of the most exquisitely simple and graceful design, and the embroidered curtains and coverlid, in the room in which she slept, where ruthless hands had torn away the royal crown from among the baskets of roses and lilies, which are still fresh in colour.

We wandered long that afternoon in the silent, melancholy garden, under the large trees which overhang the pool round which stand the sad, deserted-looking little village of toy-houses which were the playthings of the Queen and her friends—the 'mill,' the 'dairy,' and the 'farmhouse'—with their thatched roofs and neglected growth of roses and honeysuckles.

What strange sad memories they recalled, when we thought of the fate of those who had, perhaps in all good faith, believed that such idyllic scenes as these represented the lives of the groaning, overtaxed peasantry of France!

Another afternoon, on one of the last days of our stay, we drove a few miles into the country lying round Celle St. Cloud, Bougival, and Beauregard, having previously ascertained that while passing down a green lane a shell was not likely to burst in our path, or in traversing the woods we should not be taken for *suspects*, and a ball from a *chassepot* would not be sent by an *avant poste*, into the carriage.

We passed then from the present troubles back into those now in the past, and saw hundreds of acres of woodland cut down and left an impenetrable jungle—an effectual barrier to the advance of troops; avenues of fine trees felled and thrown across the road; country houses standing empty, bare, windowless, and doorless; gardens destroyed, and the walls breached for artillery, and in ruins; orchards turned into wildernesses, and what was once a cornfield become the remains of a battery. We saw Bougival and Celle so devastated, having been the scene of one of the fiercest contests between the Germans and French during a sortie from Paris, when every house was fought for inch by inch, and hand to hand, and where one garden, in which a nightingale burst into song as we passed, the ground had been strewn with dead. And then we descended the hill to the sparkling Seine, with the bridge at Marly lying a shapeless ruin in the waters; till again ascending the hill at Bougival (a train of artillery hurrying to Courbevoie passing us on the way) we were recalled from the past to the present by a distant view of Valérien in a cloud of smoke, and by our driver's explanation, '*C'est le Mont Valérien qui tire sur Paris.*'

* * * * * *

Four weeks followed upon the time when the above was written—

weeks full of ever-increasing and incessant struggle, to end in seven days of culminating horror. The army entered the city on the 21st of May, and tranquillity was restored to Paris and to France; but at the sacrifice of thousands of her citizens, the committal of the great crime of the murder of the Archbishop, and many of the most eminent of the clergy, and the destruction of the fairest and most renowned of her buildings. What has been related in the above slight notes was but the beginning of the end—the drop which comes before the storm. Perhaps it may have some interest, even at the present time, connected as it is with the sufferings of France, and the last days of the Paris of the Empire.

We returned to England with the question strong on our minds, whether we were, as a nation, sufficiently thankful for the great privileges we enjoy, as natives of an island which for centuries has seen no foreign foe upon her soil; and still more for the blessing which has preserved to us a Constitutional Government, headed by the first of Constitutional Monarchs, who in early youth was—

> 'Called to that glorious part
> To rule o'er half the Earth, and all the Sea,'

and whose highest honour it is that she has spent a long life in endeavouring to uphold that constitution, and to preserve the integrity of the Empire. And, moreover, that the 'fierce light which beats upon a throne' has but shown in clearer relief a domestic life, guided by the highest principle, which may well be an example to all classes of her subjects.

VISIONS.

BLUE eyes gazing so wistfully,
What does your fancy show?
Come, wee maiden, and tell it me—
Tell, for I fain would know.

'Woods where pretty birds always sing,
Children may always play;
Fields where buttercups always spring,
Butterflies dance all day.

'Elfin realms where the fairies dwell;
There you can understand
All that rabbits and sweet birds tell—
Oh! such a wondrous land.

'There whatever you ask for comes;
Tables with dainties spread,
Pears and apples and purple plums,
Strawberries ripe and red.

'There no rain ever comes or dark,
But, when the twilight falls,
Lamps are lit with the glow-worm's spark,
Flooding the lustrous halls.

'Halls all bright with a thousand gleams,
Flashed from the jewels rare,
Pearl and ruby and diamond beams,
Precious beyond compare.

'Never lessons the whole day long,
Nobody scolds or cries,
All is laughter and joy and song
There in my paradise.'

ALPHA.

HOLY DAYS IN PARADISE.

Their haven lies beyond th' recurring tide
Of this world's calendar,
The rolling years that fret this nearer side
Are from that shore afar.
Time's ebb and flow hears there the 'Peace, be still,'
And a great calm falls at th' Almighty Will.

Thus far, no further shalt thou come. So stays
Time's flood beside a grave;
The voyage over, through earth's troublous days,
Here the last darksome wave
Rolls back, and lo! a quiet passage cleft
Through waters on the right hand and the left,

To Lands of Promise. There, mid pastures fair,
And waters that are still,
Our blessed ones heed not the passing year,
Nor need its days fulfil.
Yet sure there is, amid their perfect rest,
Remembrance of earth's purest joys and best.

Earth's best and purest joys; for what are they
But glimpses from above?
And thus 'tis sweet to think the festal lay
That celebrates His love,
Whose care is over all—both here and there—
Echoes from this dim world to that bright sphere.

Is there caught up with notes of worthier praise,
(For there earth's taint is not).
And thus methinks our Christian Holy Days
Are not by them forgot.
Hours when such holy thoughts to man are given,
Are not, we surely feel, unmarked in Heaven.

Though from the glad home throng at Christmas-tide
Dear ones are gone for ever,
The far-off Land seems near where they abide,
While naught can mar or sever
The unity of praise. Christ's holy birth
Is hymned with joy on high—with peace on earth.

And even the awful days of Holy Week,
With solemn hours and dim,
Part them not from us. 'Tis the Lord we seek,
And they are near to Him.
No sorrow touches them for evermore,
Yet the same griefs we weep for, they adore.

So glorious Easter, sweet Ascension-tide,
And Whitsun festival,
And all bright days that with the seasons glide
And memories fair recall,
Like openings are earth's twilight glades among—
We see the City's light and hear its song.

Therefore (to us such wondrous grace is given)
With high angelic throng,
And all the blessed company of Heaven,
We join in holy song.
No longer parted while we meet in praise,
Most sweetly near on these our Holy Days.

C. M. Prevost.

DEBATABLE GROUND.

Is hero-worship injurious, either to the worshipper or the worshipped?

THIS debate has been very popular. A great number of papers have been sent in. It does not, however, appear to Chelsea China that there are very many things to say on the subject, as the same remarks recur in most of the papers. She will set first *Pellegrina's* definition of it, which she thinks very good.

'I define hero-worship as an enthusiastic admiration for real or supposed goodness in another, *free from the personal elements* of love, or family affection, or hope of *reciprocity*, therefore as truly felt for the dead as for the living.'

Chelsea China would like to substitute the word 'superiority' for 'goodness' in this extract as covering a wider ground; but she considers that the impersonal element in hero-worship, the fact that it cannot look for a return, is what differentiates it from all other relations of the feelings. For it is worship, the upward look to a being higher than the looker.

It is a sort of '*star*light unto sunlight' as compared to the more mutual relations, pure and high, bright and fascinating; but, if unalloyed and unmixed, a little mystical and cold. Or so it seems to many, for it is not every one who is capable of retaining the feeling for a hero personally known; natures that find satisfaction in it must be high-toned and romantic, and perhaps not always the most tender. Of course, a hero may *also* become a friend or a lover, a mutual relation may spring up between him and his worshipper, or it may not. But the hero-worship can only be one-sided.

Now Chelsea China does not think that worship of a dead or unknown hero, though it may confuse a person's opinions, can bring much disturbance into his or her life. Of course, to a man in public life, public relations *are* personal, and it must be admitted that some great leaders of thought have had an influence on their generation which has made differing from them as hard as differing from an actual friend; but, as a general rule, what may be called public hero-worship is tolerably safe. But when the brave soldier with his Victoria Cross, the devoted clergyman giving his life to save souls, or the original or learned teacher who opens new worlds, are personal friends, and it must be remembered that the qualities which

create hero-worship are relative as well as absolute, what of that ideal, star-shiny feeling then?

Chelsea China thinks that if the separate one-sided character of hero-worship could be fully understood—if it could, in fact, be more generally recognised *as* one of the feelings of life—a greater number of people, especially if they practised reticence of expression, might enjoy with safety, and without misunderstanding, its peculiar and elevating pleasures. 'The brooks see but one moon, but the moon sees many brooks' should be the motto of the hero-worshipper; and if, as she may well be, to her great good, she is a *heroine* worshipper also or instead, she will not find the saying useless, even if she has the joy of becoming her heroine's friend. The danger of confusing hero-worship with other forms of affection, is not what has most struck the debaters, and most of their warnings, as to exaggeration of feeling and preferring persons to principles, will speak for themselves. Silly and gushing friendships do not appear to Chelsea China to be hero-worship at all.

The fear of disappointment is insisted on by several, and, as to this, Chelsea China would like to say a word. Of course, an unworthy or false hero, like a false or unworthy lover or friend, is a great misfortune, and there is nothing to do but to bear the discovery. Life has, in that way at least, gone wrong.

But as to out-developing your hero, if there is such a word, outgrowing him, ceasing to agree with him, feeling that in some things you know more or better, the soul that therefore ceases to think him heroic, is not capable of true hero-worship at all. 'Dwarfs sitting on giants' shoulders see farther than giants.' They do, but those who bear them up are giants still.

The advantages given of hero-worship may be summed up as leading outward, and leading upward.

The disadvantages as leading in some way astray, or as leading to disappointment.

As to the hero himself, the upshot appears to be, that if he is truly heroic, he will be rather humbled than injured by the sense of his influence; but that the worship will act as a kind of test in laying hold of his weak points, if he has any, as most 'earthen vessels' have.

Eyebright and *Rustic* consider it injurious to both parties.

Alys' instance does not appear to Chelsea China to be hero-worship at all.

K. E. T. balances the arguments. *W.* quotes 'Thank God for a well-placed attachment, even if disappointed.'

Eleanor and *F. McLean*, good for the worshipper and bad for the worshipped.

E. C., *Ithuriel*, *Blackbird*, *Ethedred*, *Willie*, *Nancy Lee*, *Chichester Cross*, *Golden Gown*, *Speedwell*, all consider it beneficial both to the hero and to his worshippers.

Flittermouse.—As to the worshipper himself; all real, honest hero-

worship is of necessity humble, unselfish, self-forgetful, for the essence of worship is *giving*, not *getting;* the very term 'hero-worship' implies an attitude of looking up, which in itself precludes the possibility of any desire for the return of such a sentiment. The object may be unworthy, its virtues and beauties may have no existence elsewhere than in the golden halo of imagination, yet, in so far as the worshipper yields reverence to what is to him the ideal of all that is true, honest, just, pure, lovely, hero-worship must have a refining, elevating influence. 'There are many ways by which we are led upwards,' and the longing to lead a purer, nobler, more unselfish life comes differently to different natures, but to many it does certainly come, more or less directly, through the instinct of 'hero-worship.'

Popinjay.—I should be inclined to say that the best safe-guard for us in the worship of any particular hero is a firm belief in the real existence of heroes apart from our own experience of them. If we really believe in God as the Ruler of the world 'here and now' we cannot well think that there are no longer any persons living under the influence of His Spirit—no longer an Elect People—'highly favoured' above others in this very thing that they are chosen as the means of leading them higher.

Lucciola.—The Perfect One is your Sun, all others shrine only as His satellites, and by reflecting His Light. The more they reflect of that, the less likely are they to disappoint you, or your worship to harm them. Hero-worship only harms when it deceives. If you see faults in your hero (and who is without them?) own them bravely. Call wrong wrong, when your idol does it, and right right, even in a rival or an enemy. We have our loves and friendships only in earthen vessels here, and must learn to separate the vile from the precious, even where we most admire. Be hero-worshippers then, especially in youth; but take the cardinal virtues to your aid; Prudence in choosing your heroes; Temperance in praising them; Justice in owing their defects and their rival's merits; Fortitude even when they disappoint you. Then you may freely admire and worship excellence; nay, in a hero who will stand the test we have given, you may garner up your very soul. He cannot harm you nor you him if he lead you nearer to the Centre and Fountain of Light, Who, while He makes one star to differ from another star in glory, yet 'telleth the number of the stars, and calleth them all by their names.'

Like the subject of most other questions debated in Debatable Ground, Hero-worship seems to be good at one stage of moral growth and bad at another. No one could wish, for instance, that the present generation now growing up should have been without their share of Gordon-worship; and yet it is impossible to the middle-aged

not to feel that but for the indiscriminating admiration of the British nation, which insisted that the hero was capable of performing impossibilities, the tragedy of Khartoum might have been averted.

Where the bad stage of hero-worship begins—so far as the worshipper is concerned—seems to be where the delight of emotional admiration drowns the duty of *fairness*. This seems to me to have been a danger unseen by the last generation. Just as some families make it a matter of conscience to think that everything done by members of the family must be right, and any criticism upon any of them offensive, so some sets of people—more especially in the last generation—have made their special heroes a kind of fetish, so that they judge of others by their attitude towards them, and turn away from any kind of criticism which might lead to fresh light being thrown on their characters. So the early High-Church party behaved with regard to Charles I.; so Carlyle behaved with regard to Cromwell; so numberless followers have worshipped Newman and Maurice, Beaconsfield and Gladstone. But surely impatience of criticism upon our heroes shows that personal emotion is dearer to us than the impersonal laws of right and wrong, and when we get past the age of early youth in which personal emotion is a good and sufficient motive for action, hero-worship must dwarf our minds if it leads us to shut our eyes to any truth we might otherwise learn.

With regard to the worshipped, to feel oneself the object of indiscriminating admiration must make one either blind or else sick. If the latter no harm is done; if the former the admiration of the worshipper may be the most fatal gift possible to the worshipped.

Spermologos.—Hero-worship of the dead is wholesome and inspiriting. An enthusiasm for Socrates, Epanimondas, St. Ambrose, King Alfred, St. Louis, Bayard or Ken, can only help to elevate the character.

Hero-worship of the living is a different thing. For the very young, from whom the great man is almost as much removed as if he were no more in this world, it may often be of the same inspiring kind, e.g. our elders had that sort of feeling for 'the Duke' while he was yet with us, as an incarnation of truth, honour, courage, and loyalty, and it was wholesome to feel high chivalry not a thing of the past.

But as a general rule living hero-worship has the dangers of becoming Pope-worship. No living man is infallible, and if the hero errs, his worshippers either blindly err with him, or have to wrench themselves away with an anguish that is never healed, and sometimes with diminished faith in goodness itself.

And to the hero himself there is the great peril of being blinded and intoxicated by the fumes of the incense wafted round him, and believing of himself, 'It is the voice of a god, not the voice of a man.' No flattery is so dangerous as sincere flattery, and great is the need of the warning to take heed—'when all men speak well of thee.' 'Praise be thy penance here.'

Pelegrina.—I think it highly beneficial to the character of the worshipper. The better the hero the more salutary the worship; but even the worship of the poor hero of a low ideal is better than nothing, and sometimes proves the lever for raising a very unhopeful character. Even when carried to the point of silliness, it is not among the most objectional forms of folly; indeed, it is a promising weakness in the young; whereas, those persons who are not moved by greatness, rather prove their own littleness than their superior wisdom.

But I think hero-worship on the whole injurious to the hero. 'Lionism,' says Carlyle, 'ruins innumerable men.' 'Praise,' says Keble, is a 'blind guide, and blinding all who hear her call.' Admiration is sweet, and the love of it indulged till it becomes a craving, has wrecked many a once noble character. Then is not the desire for fame and honour a justifiable motive for action? Yes—for honour, apart from the recognition of it by others. It may be hard when such recognition is withheld; but it is common, and those thus tried may remember that the 'world knows nothing of' many of 'its greatest men.'

There are other great and good men who stand the severe test of hero-worship without being injured by it. They may be strong in that rarest of virtues, humility. For instance, the truly gifted poet, musician or artist, has so high an ideal that a sense of failure keeps him humble. The distinguished soldier, and none are more exposed to hero-worship, feels, as the word imports, that it is opportunity as well as merit that brings the homage he receives, and that there may be many unknown men as good as he. The great statesmen knows how to discount the applause of the multitude, and how little of real worth, their idols often possess. Finally, the greatest men, those the world consents to honour after their death, were often neglected and overlooked during their lives; indeed, we may hesitate about calling any one absolutely great till time has set its seal upon his life and work.

Pride Hill.—The hero-worship of to-day, and that hero-worship which we read of in ancient writers, have not much in common with each other. The ancients made hero-worship a part of their very religion, and though it played but a small part, it bore nevertheless an almost christianlike character, if we may so say. For whereas their chief worship was mainly in honour of almost useless divinities, their hero-worship was accorded to persons who really had benefited their fellow-men. Such hero-worship was noble, and though to a great extent bound up with superstition, showed that the Greek appreciated the efforts of their heroes.

It is harder to decide as to the feelings which prompted the worship of the Emperor at Rome. In this case the Emperor was deified while still living, and honoured with the title of 'Divus Cæsar.' Sycophancy or the Emperor's pleasure may have instituted it at Rome, but this blind worship extended over the whole Roman

world; a worship of a man, and a man whom the poor barbarian had never set eyes on, but nevertheless regarded as his master and even benefactor by whom he was allowed to retain his liberty. Such a worship closely resembled Christianity, and, indeed, prepared the way for it.

Turning to more modern times, we find that hero-worship has lost its old formality and superstition; but the feeling which prompts it is the same. We find also that modern hero-worship is more injurious to both the hero and his admirers, for the simplicity which marked the Greek hero-worship has been lost. The worshipped is in danger of becoming conceited, the worshippers in danger of being misled. We cannot shut our eyes to the fact that hero-worship has done much harm to our nation, through the blind following of an eloquent statesman and belief in his infallibility. Nothing but injury is being done the French nation by its obstinate adhesion to General Boulanger, and this is an instance of hero-worship carried to its very worst extreme. The temporary outburst of public sympathy which greeted the tidings of General Gordon's death was of a totally different character, and served to elevate, for a time at least, men's thoughts, and to open their eyes. Hero-worship is to be found in every class and institution; but nowhere is it so strongly marked, perhaps, as in a public school. No one can have read 'Tom Brown's Schooldays' and have failed to notice the veneration shown towards elder boys; I will venture to say that 'Pater Brooke,' and boys of his stamp (and there are such at every great school), possess as much influence as even the masters themselves. Schools may change its customs and 'sets;' but its hero-worship never wanes. Few boys ever possess, I suppose, the same influence or importance in after life as they did in the sixth form at their school. Sydney Smith declaims against this hero-worship. 'The "head" of a public school,' says he, 'is generally a very conceited young man.' Probably, however, he is no more conceited than the new type of 'cheeky' youngster who has risen into being since the decline of the old 'fagging' system. Accordingly, taking a sixth-form boy as a specimen of hero, and the common herd of school boys as the type of perfectly voluntary worshippers, we may affirm that the harm done either party is next to nothing, though avoidable danger does exist to a certain degree.

Further remarks on: Is Verbal Truthfulness always the Highest Duty?

So good and so well summed-up a debate, that I would not add a word, except that I think one aspect is not quite fully brought out. An awful criticism of a contemporary politician says: 'He can make truth serve for falsehood, and falsehood for truth.' This is *terribly possible.* Verbal truthfulness, then, may serve to deceive, and cannot

always 'be the highest duty.' Yet by our words we shall be justified or condemned—and out of the abundance of the heart our words come to our lips. Well, then, a person may out of the evil treasure of an untrue heart make even verbal truth give a false impression; while the good and true in heart may reserve their words or keep silence without forfeiting truth. Truth *is* our highest duty, but its source is the heart, not the mouth, and they who have used no deceit with their tongue stand first of those who dwell in God's tabernacle here, and shall rest on His holy hill hereafter. One remark more. It is true that only one instance occurs in the New Testament of untruthfulness—do we note that all the conditions existed which our Debaters think justify reserve and concealment? The man told no lie, and his act, keeping part of the money, was no sin. St. Peter said this, and that he had not 'lied unto man;' he simply held his tongue. It was not giving a wrong impression, but allowing another person to take one; this reserve came from an untruthful heart. To this thoroughly self-deceived man, the inspired words were a self-revelation, and they killed him; 'blasted with excess of light'—he sank beneath them. The wife told a lie—why? To save her husband's character. He may have made her promise not to betray him, and she knew not what he had said, or that he was gone where no sophistry can avail. The Apostle's words, telling her she was a widow, struck as the lightning's wing—they killed her. Surely this story, unique in the New Testament, written for our learning, standing at the very threshold of Christendom, is a key to some of the difficulties mentioned in our debate. Have we never kept a silence as culpable as that of Ananias—told an untruth with less excuse than Sapphira? Happy those who can say so. We hope that they 'mercy sought and mercy found' in the awful moment of departure. But our point is this: verbal truthfulness does not secure truth of heart. Keep the heart single and pure, and the lips will never lead us very far wrong; but from an untrue heart, even verbal accuracy is not truth. If we cultivate sincerity, we may be sure of attaining to that right judgment in all things, which will show us what to say, how much to reserve; when to use lawful conventionalisms, and when to avoid truth for truth's sake. 'Seeking our Zion with our faces thitherwards,' let us remember that whatsoever *loveth* as well as whatsoever *maketh* a lie, is to have no entrance there.

LUCCIOLA.

SUBJECT FOR OCTOBER.

Should custom and conventionality rule the life of woman, or no? In other words, Has Mrs. Grundy a beneficial influence?

HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

History of Rome.

Questions for October.

37. Name the eight allied nations which declared war against Rome. What were the causes, and the results, of the Social War?

38. Relate the acts and adventures of Marius, from the time of his flight from Rome (B.C. 88), till his death.

39. Mention the principal events of the First Mithridatic War, and the terms on which peace was concluded.

40. Describe the Dictatorship of Sylla.

May Class List.

First Class.

Grasshopper	40	C Minor, Speranza	32
Lisle	37	Vorwärts, Charissa	31
Robin	35	Clotho, Atropos, Bluebell, Water-wagtail, Emu	30
Wylmecote, Rags, Tacitus	34		
Lachesis, Livy	33		

Second Class.

Popinjay, White Cat, Midge	29	Horatius, Madge Wildfire	25
C Major, Tortoise, Ignavus, Claudia, Woodpecker	28	Romola, Marius, Portia (Ealing), Mabel	24
Budgerigar, Lille Fröken	27	Elpis, Carlo	23
Fieldfare, Stanzerl, Repullulat, Portia, Fidelia	26	Countess	22
		Lily, Deryn, Carlotta	20

Third Class.

Nesera	19	Spearmaid, Zugvogel	13
Glaucia, Edelweiss	17	Daphne	6

REMARKS.

17. The fact that Tarentum was a Lacedæmonian colony, founded B.C. 708, while Thurii was Athenian, founded by Pericles, B.C. 443, may account to some extent for the hostility between the two Greek cities. *Stanzerl* misplaces the Tarentines' attack on Thurii, which took place after the naval demonstration of the Romans, not before it. *C Major* says Valerius came with twenty ships (instead of ten). *Midge* does not mention Thurii. *Countess* mistakes the Gulf of Tarentum for the Ambracian Gulf on the Coast of Epirus.

18. *Lille Fröken*, *Madge Wildfire*, and others: a 'Pyrrhic victory' is a proverbial expression for a victory which costs nearly as much as a defeat; in allusion to the saying of Pyrrhus after the Battle of Heraclea, 'One more such victory, and we are undone!'

Carlotta omits his third campaign, B.C. 275, and final defeat at Beneventum. *Speranza:* the elephants were called by the Romans 'Lucanian' (not 'Thessalian') 'oxen.'

19. Præfectura = a conquered town, governed by a Roman præfect, and having no rights of Roman citizenship; e.g. Cœre.

Municipium = an allied town, enjoying local self-government, and usually possessing the civil, but not the political rights; e.g. Volsinii.

Colonia Romana = a Roman garrison in a conquered town, retaining the full Roman franchise; e.g. Antium.

Colonia Latina = a large mixed body of settlers, Roman and Latin, occupying a town subject to Rome, and possessing a franchise in various degrees; e.g. Aquileia.

The points here briefly indicated are best explained by *Lisle*, *Tacitus*, *Robin*, *Grasshopper*, and *Livy*. *C Minor* gives no examples; *Rags*, *Wylmecote*, and others, only one each.

20. The legend of Dido and the ox-hide is obviously derived from the accidental similarity between the Greek word Byrsa, which means 'a hide,' and Bozra, the Phœnician name for a fortress. *Tacitus* gives no account of the government of Carthage, which was by two Suffetes or Judges, a Senate of three hundred, and a Council of one hundred, elected for life, in whom all real power was centred. It should be observed that the actual territory of Carthage did not exceed the dimensions of the modern state of Tunis, though her indirect influence extended over the whole northern coast of Africa, from the Greater Syrtis to the Pillars of Hercules. *Woodpecker* oddly calls Cyrene 'a neighbouring town.' The distance between Carthage and Cyrene was rather greater than that between London and Vienna.

Deryn sends nine pages instead of five, and therefore gains no marks for her answer to Question 20.

Notices to Correspondents.

THE MISSION PARCEL SOCIETY.

SIR,

Will you kindly give me space for a few words, asking those of your readers who are willing to do something for our missionaries, to post regularly one or more of their newspapers and magazines when read, to an address which I will gladly supply, together with postal rates, etc., on receiving from them a stamped envelope and the name of the paper offered. I keep a register containing the addresses of missionaries, and a list of the papers each receives; also what each specially asks for. Letters are constantly arriving from abroad full of gratitude and appreciation for this little act of kindness, and are quite sufficient to repay senders for the small trouble or expense they incur.

MARY E. WEBSTER,
Ripple Lodge, Malvern Link.

Will some one kindly lend me an English translation of 'Sintram'? I will pay the postage.—M. HAYLEY, Brightling Rectory, Hawkhurst.

Miss Buckland.—The Dream of Gerontius is in *Verses on Various Occasions* by Cardinal Newman (Burns and Oates).

C. Dunbar.—There is a list of Deaf and Dumb Institutions in the English-woman's Year Book (Hatchard), Price 1*s.* One is mentioned at Glasgow, but with no particulars. Ladies Christian Home for Deaf Mutes, on the Oral System, 80, Pentonville Road, S. Cost not given. Addresses of others given.

Mary would be glad to know where she can find the hymn in which are the lines—

'For the strength of the hills, we bless Thee,
Our God, our fathers' God.'

MISS BRAMBLE,
Cleeve House, Near Yatton.

A Modern Girl will find her cause taken up by several of her sisters in succeeding numbers of the 'Monthly Packet,' after the one to which she refers. She says some sensible things, but why does she plead for debasing our language?

Will any of the kind friends who helped us last year, again come forward to aid in providing Christmas Tea and Entertainment for a lads' club in the very poor mission parish of 'Holycross in St. Pancras.' The smallest contributions most thankfully received and acknowledged by the Hon. Sec., Miss E. Bristow, 'Young Men's Friendly Lodge,' 2, Argyle Place, Argyle Street, King's Cross.

The questions on the first Lessons have not been republished, but in the 12th and 13th vols. of the Monthly Paper, they are adapted to the present Lectionary, and those on the new Lessons added.

Hope.—The Epistle and Gospel in the Burial Service of 1549 are 1 Thess. iv. 13–18, and John vi. 37–39. Unfortunately I cannot give a reference to the Jewish prayer.

A Constant Subscriber—

'The plans of men and mice gang aft ajee.'

See Burns's 'Field Mouse.'

Change the word sister for brother. It was a misprint of an allusion to Prospero's saying, 'In the late storm I, too, have lost a daughter.'

The Monthly Packet.

NOVEMBER, 1887.

BEECHCROFT AT ROCKSTONE.

BY THE EDITOR.

CHAPTER XI.

LADY MERRIFIELD'S CHRISTMAS LETTER-BAG.

(PRIMROSE.)

'MY DEAR MAMMA,

'I wish you a merry Christmas, and papa and sisters and Claude, too. I only hooped once to-day, and Nurse says I may go out when it gets fine. Fly is better. She sent me her dolls' house in a big box in a cart, and Mysie sent a new frock of her own making for Liliana, and Uncle William gave me a lovely doll, with waxen arms and legs, that shuts her eyes and squeals, and says Mamma; but I do not want anything but my own dear mamma, and all the rest.

'I am mamma's own little

'PRIMROSE.'

(FERGUS.)

'Coalham.

'MY DEAR MAMMA,

'I wish you and papa, and all, a happy Crismas, and I send a plan of the great coal mine for a card. It is much jollier here than at Rockquay, for it is all black with cinders, and there are little fires all night, and there are lots of oars and oxhide and fossils and ferns and real curiozitys, and nobody minds noises nor muddy boots, and they aren't at one to wash your hands, for they can't be clean ever; and there was a real row in the street last night just outside. We are to go down a mine some day when Cousin David has time. I mean to be a great jeologist and get lots of specimens, and please bring me home all the minerals in Ceylon. Harry gave me a hammer.

'I am your affectionate son,

'FERGUS MERRIFIELD.'

(VALETTA.)

'MY DEAREST MAMMA,

'I hope you will like my card. Aunt Ada did none of it, only showed me how, and Aunt Jane says I may tell you I am really trying to be good. I am helping her gild fir cones for a Christmas-tree for the quire, and they will sing carols. Macrae brought some for us the day before yesterday, and a famous lot of holly and ivy and mistletoe and flowers, and three turkeys and some hams and pheasants and partridges. Aunt Jane sent the biggest turkey and ham in a basket covered up with holly to Mrs. White, and another to Mrs. Hablot, and they are doing the church with the holly and ivy. We are to eat the other the day after to-morrow, and Mr. Grant and Miss Burne, who teaches the youngest form, are coming. It was only cold beef to-day, to let Mrs. Mount go to church; but we had mince pies, and I am going to Kitty's Christmas party to-morrow, and we shall dance—so Aunt Ada has given me a new white frock and a lovely Roman sash of her own. Poor old Mrs. Vincent is dead and Fergus's great black rabbit, and poor little Mary Brown with dip— (blot). I can't spell it, and nobody is here to tell me how, but the thing in people's throats, and poor Anne has got it, and Dr. Ellis says it was a mercy we were all away from home, for we should have had it too, and that would have been ever so much worse than the whooping-cough.

'I have lots of cards, but my presents are waiting for my birthday, when Maura is to come to tea. It is much nicer than I thought the holidays would be. Maura White has got the prize for French and Latin. It is a lovely Shakespeare. I wish I had been good, for I think I should have got it. Only she does want more help than I do—so perhaps it is lucky I did not. No, I don't mean lucky either.

'Your affectionate little daughter,
'VAL.'

(WILFRED.)

'DEAR MOTHER,

'Fergus is such a little ape that he will send you that disgusting coal mine on his card, as if you would care for it. I know you will like mine much better—that old buffer skating into a hole in the ice. I don't mind being here, for though Harry and Davy get up frightfully early to go to church, they don't want us down till they come back, and we can have fun all day, except when Harry screws me down to my holiday task, which is a disgusting one, about the Wars of the Roses. Harry does look so rum now that he is got up for a parson that we did not know him when he met us at the station. There was an awful row outside here last night between two sets of Waits. David went out and parted them, and I thought he would have got a black eye. All the choir had supper here, for

there was a service in the middle of the night; but they did not want us at it; and on Tuesday we are to have a Christmas ship, and a magic-lantern, and Rollo and Mr. Bowater are coming to help—he is the clergyman at the next place—and no end of fun, and the biggest dog you ever saw. Fergus has got one of his crazes worse than ever about old stones, and is always in the coal hole, poking after ferns and things. Wishing you a merry Christmas.

'Your affectionate son,

'WILFRED MERRIFIELD.'

(MYSIE.)

'Rotherwood, *Christmas-Day.*

'MY OWN DEAREST MAMMA,

'A very happy Christmas to you, and papa and Claude and my sisters, and here are the cards, which Miss Elbury helped me about so kindly that I think they are better than usual; I mean that she advised me, for no one touched them but myself. You will like your text, I hope; I chose it because it is so nice to think we are all one, though we are in so many different places. I did one with the same for poor Dolores in New Zealand. Uncle William was here yesterday, and he said dear little Primrose is almost quite well. Fly is much better to-day, her eyes look quite bright, and she is to sit up a little while in the afternoon, but I may not talk to her for fear of making her cough; but she slept all night without one whoop, and will soon be well now. Cousin Rotherwood was so glad that he was quite funny this morning, and he gave me the loveliest writing-case you ever saw, with a good lock and gold key, and gold tops to everything, and my three M's engraved on them all. I have so many presents and cards that I will write out a list when I have finished my letter. I shall have plenty of time, for everybody is gone to church except Cousin Florence, who went early.

'I am to dine at the late dinner, which will be early, because of the church singers, and Cousin Rotherwood says he and I will do snapdragon, if I will promise not to whoop.

'4.30.—I had to stop again because of the doctor. He says he does not want to have any more to do with me, and that I may go out the first fine day, and that Fly is much better. And only think! He says Rockquay is the very place for Fly, and as soon as we are not catching we are all to go there. Cousin Rotherwood told me so for a great secret; but he said I might tell you, and that he would ask Aunt Alethea to let Primrose come too. It does warm one up to think of it, and it is much easier to feel thankful and glad about all the rest of the right sort of Christmas happiness, now I am so near having Gill and Val again.

'Your very loving child,

'M. M. MERRIFIELD.'

(JASPER.)

'Vale Leston Priory,
'*Dec. 25th.*

'DEAREST MOTHER,

'Here are my Christmas wishes that we may all be right again at home this year, and that you could see the brace of pheasants I killed. However, Gill and I are in uncommonly nice quarters. I shall let her tell the long story about who is who, for there is such a swarm of cousins, and uncles and aunts, and when you think you have hold of the right one, it turns out to be the other lot. There are three houses choke full of them, and more floating about, and all running in and out, till it gets like the little pig that could not be counted, it ran about so fast. They are all Underwood or Harewood, more or less, except the Vanderkists, who are all girls except a little fellow in knickerbockers. Poor little chap, his father was a great man on the turf, and ruined him horse and foot before he was born, and then died of D. T., and his mother is a great invalid, and very badly off, with no end of daughters—the most stunning girls you ever saw, real beauties, and no mistake, especially Emily, who is great fun besides. She is to be Helena when we act Midsummer Night's Dream on Twelfth-night for all the natives, and I am Demetrius, dirty cad that he is. She lives with the Grinsteads, and Anna with the Travis Underwoods, Phyllis's young man's bosses. If he makes as good a thing of it as they have done, she will be no end of a swell. Mr. Travis Underwood has brought down his hunters and gives me a mount. Claude would go stark staring mad to see his Campeador.

'They are awfully musical here, and are always at carols or something, and that's the only thing against them. As to Gill, she is in clover, in raptures with every one, especially Mrs. Grinstead, and I think it is doing her good.

'Your affectionate son,
'J. R. M.'

(GILLIAN.)

'DEAREST MAMMA,

'All Christmas love, and a message to Phyllis that I almost forgive her desertion for the sake of the set of connections she has brought us, like the nearest and dearest relations or more, but Geraldine—for so she told me to call her—is still the choicest of all. It is so pretty to see her husband—the great sculptor—wait on her, as if she was a queen and he her knight! Anna told me that he had been in love with her ever so long, and she refused him once, but after the eldest brother died, and she was living at St. Wulstan's, he tried again, and she could not hold out. I told you of her charming house, so full of lovely things, and about Gerald, all cleverness and spirit, but too delicate for a public school. He is such a contrast to Edward Harewood, a great sturdy, red-

haired fellow, who is always about with Jasper, except when he—Japs, I mean—is with Emily Vanderkist. She is the prettiest of the Vanderkists. There are eight of them besides little Sir Adrian. Mary always stays to look after her mother, who is in very bad health, and has weak eyes. They call Mary invaluable and so very good, but she is like a homely little Dutchwoman, and nobody would think she was only twenty. Sophy, the next to her, calls herself pupil-teacher to Mrs. William Harewood, and together they manage the schoolroom for all the younger sisters, the two little girls at the Vicarage, and Wilmet, the only girl here at the Priory, but, of course, no lessons are going on now, only learning and rehearsing the parts, and making the dresses, painting the scenes, and learning songs. They all do care so much about music here, that I find I really know hardly anything about it, and Jasper says it is their only failing.

'They say Mr. Lancelot Underwood sings and plays better than any of them; but he is at Stoneborough. However, he is coming over with all the Mays for our play, old Dr. May and all. I was very much surprised to find he was an organist and a bookseller, but Geraldine told me about it, and how it was for the sake of the eldest brother—"my brother" they all say, and somehow it seems as if the house was still his, though it is twelve years since he died. And yet they are all such happy, merry people. I wish I could let you know how delightful it all is. Sometimes I feel as if I did not deserve to have such a pleasant time. I can't quite explain, but to be with Geraldine Grinstead makes one feel oneself to be of a ruder, more selfish mould, and I know I have not been all I ought to be at Rockstone; but I don't mind telling you, now you are so soon to be at home, Aunt Jane seems to worry me—I can't tell how, exactly—while there is something about Geraldine that soothes and brightens, and all the time makes one long to be better.

'I never heard such sermons as Mr. Harewood's, either; it seems as if I had never listened before, but these go right down into one. I cannot leave off thinking about the one last Sunday, about "making manifest the counsels of all hearts." I see now that I was not as much justified in not consulting Aunt Jane about Kalliope and Alexis as I thought I was, and that the concealment was wrong. It came over me before the beautiful early Celebration this morning, and I could not feel as if I ought to be there till I had made a resolution to tell her all about it, though I should like it not to be till you are come home, and can tell her that I am not really like Dolores, as she will be sure to think me, for I really did it not out of silliness and opposition, but because I knew how good they were, and I *did* tell you. Honestly, perhaps there was some opposition in the spirit of it; but I mean to make a fresh start when I come back, and you will be near at hand then, and that will help me.

'26*th*.—The afternoon service of song began and I was called off. I never heard anything so lovely, and we had a delightful evening.

I can't tell you about it now, for I am snatching a moment when I am not rehearsing, as this must go to-day. Dr. and Miss May, and the Lances, as they call them, are just come. The Doctor is a beautiful old man. All the children were round him directly, and he kissed me, and said he was proud to meet the daughter of such a distinguished man.

'This must go. 'Your loving daughter,

'JULIANA MERRIFIELD.'

(HARRY.)

'Coalham, *Christmas-Day.*

'IT is nearly St. Stephen's Day, for, dear mother, I have not had a minute before to send you or my father my Christmas greeting. We have had most joyous services, unusually well attended, David tells me, and that makes up for the demonstration we had outside the door last night. David is the right fellow for this place, though we are disapproved of as south country folk. The boys are well and amused, Wilfred much more conformable for being treated more as a man, and Fergus greatly come on, and never any trouble, being always dead-set on some pursuit. It is geology, or rather mineralogy, at present, and if he carries home all the stones he has accumulated in the back yard, he will have a tolerable charge for extra luggage. David says there is the making of a great man in him, I think it is of an Uncle Maurice. Macrae writes to me in a state of despair about the drains at Silverfold; scarlet fever and diphtheria abound at the town, so that he says you cannot come back there till something has been done, and he wants me to come and look at them; but I do not see how I can leave David at present, as we are in the thick of classes for Baptism and Confirmation in Lent, and I suspect Aunt Jane knows more about the matter than I do.

'Gillian and Jasper seem to be in a state of great felicity at Vale Leston—and Mysie getting better, but poor little Phyllis Devereux has been seriously ill.

'Your affectionate son,

'H. MERRIFIELD.'

(AUNT JANE AND AUNT ADELINE.)

'11.30, *Christmas-Eve.*

'MY DEAREST LILY,

'This will be a joint letter, for Ada will finish it to-morrow, and I must make the most of my time while waiting for the Waits to dwell on unsavoury business. Macrae came over here with a convoy of all sorts of "delicacies of the season," for which thank you heartily in the name of Whites, Hablots, and others who partook thereof, according, no doubt, to your kind intention. He was greatly perturbed, poor man, for your cook has been very ill with

diphtheria, and the scarlet fever is severe all round; there have been some deaths, and the gardener's child was in great danger. The doctor has analysed the water, and finds it in a very bad state, so that your absence this autumn is providential. If you are in haste, telegraph to me, and I will meet your landlord there, and the sanitary inspector, and see what can be done, without waiting for Jasper. At any rate, you cannot go back there at once. Shall I secure a furnished house for you here? The Rotherwoods are coming to the Hotel, next door to us, as soon as Phyllis is fit to move and infection over. Victoria will stay there with the children, and he go back and forwards. If Harry and Phyllis May should come home, I suppose their headquarters will be at Stoneborough; but still this would be the best place for a family gathering. Moreover, Fergus gets on very nicely at Mrs. Edgar's, and it would be a pity to disturb him. On the other hand, I am not sure of the influences of the place upon the——

'*Christmas-Day*, 3 P.M.—There came the Waits I suppose, and Jane had to stop, and leave me to take up the thread. Poor dear Jenny, the festival days are no days of rest to her, but I am not sure that she would enjoy repose, or that it would not be the worse possible penance to her. She is gone down now to the workhouse with Valetta to take cards and tea and tobacco to the old people, not sending them, because she says a few personal wishes and the sight of a bright child will be worth something to the old bodies. Then comes tea for the choir boys, before Evensong and carols, and after that my turn may come for what remains of the evening. I must say the church is lovely, thanks to your arums and camellias which Macrae brought us just in time. It is very unfortunate that Silverford should be in such a state, but delightful for us if it sends you here; and this brings me to Jenny's broken thread, which I must spin on, though I tell her to take warning by you, when you so repented having brought Maurice home by premature wails about Dolores. Perhaps impatience is a danger to all of us, and I believe there is such a thing as over-candour.

'What Jane was going to say was that she did not think the place had been good for either of the girls; but all that would be obviated by your presence. If poor Miss Vincent joins you, now that she is free, you would have your own schoolroom again, and the locality would not make much difference. Indeed, if the Rotherwood party come by the end of the holidays, I have very little doubt that Victoria will allow Valetta to join Phyllis and Mysie in the schoolroom, and that would prevent any talk about her removal from the High School. The poor little thing has behaved as well as possible ever since, and is an excellent companion; Jane is sure that it has been a lesson that will last her for life, and I am convinced that she was under an influence that you can put an end to, I mean that White family. Jane thinks well of the eldest daughter in spite

of her fringe, and of her refusal to enter the G. F. S., but I have good reason for knowing that she holds assignations in Mr. White's garden on Sunday afternoons with young Stebbing, whose mother knows her to be a most artful and dangerous girl, though she is so clever at the mosaic work that there is no getting her discharged. Mrs. Stebbing called to warn us against her, and as I was the only person at home, told me how she had learnt from Mr. White's housekeeper that this girl comes every Sunday alone to walk in the gardens, she was sure it must be to meet somebody, and they are quite accessible to an active young man on the side towards the sea. He is going in a few days to join the other partner at the Italian quarries, greatly in order that the connection may be broken off. It is very odd that Jane, generally so acute, should be so blind here. All she said was "That's just the time Gillian is so bent on mooning in the garden." It is a mere absurdity, Gillian always goes to the children's service, and besides, she was absent last Sunday, when Miss White was certainly there. But Gillian lends the girl books, and altogether patronises her in a manner which is somewhat perplexing to us; though as it cannot last long, Jane thinks it better not to interfere before your return to judge for yourself. These young people are members of the Kennel Church congregation, and I had an opportunity of talking to Mr. Flight about them. He says he had a high opinion of the brother, and hoped to help him to some higher education, with a view perhaps to Holy Orders, but that it was so clearly the youth's duty to support his mother, and it was so impossible for her to get on without his earnings, that he (Mr. Flight, I mean) had decided to let him alone that his stability might be proved, or till some opening offered, and of late there had been reason for disappointment, tokens of being unsettled, and reports of meetings with some young woman at his sister's office. It is always the way when one tries to be interested in those half-and-half people, the essential vulgarity is sure to break out, generally in the spirit of flirtation conducted in an underhand manner. And oh! that mother. I write all this because you had better be aware of the state of things before your return. I am afraid, however, that between us we have not written you a very cheering Christmas letter.

'There is a great question about a supply of water to the town. Much excitement is caused by the expectation of Rotherwood's visit, and it is even said that he is to be met here by the great White himself, whom I have always regarded as a sort of mythical personage, not to say a harpy, always snatching away every promising family of Jane's to the Italian quarries.

'You will have parted with the dear girls by this time, and be feeling very sad and solitary; but it is altogether a good connection, and a great advantage. I have just addressed to Gillian, at Vale Leston, a coronetted envelope, which must be an invitation from

Lady Liddersdale. I am very glad of it. Nothing is so likely as such society to raise her above the tone of these Whites.

'Your loving

'A. M.'

'10.30 P.M.—These Whites! Really I don't think it as bad as Ada supposes, so don't be uneasy, though it is a pity she has told you so much of the gossip respecting them. I do not believe any harm of that girl Kalliope; she has such an honest, modest pair of eyes. I dare say she is persecuted by that young Stebbing, for she is very handsome, and he is an odious puppy. But as to her assignations in the garden, if they are with any one, it is with Gillian, and I see no harm in them, except that we might have been told—only that would have robbed the entire story of its flavour, I suppose. Besides, I greatly disbelieve the entire story, so don't be worried about it! There—as if we had not been doing our best to worry you! But come home, dearest old Lily. Gather your chicks under your wing, and when you cluck them together again, all will be well. I don't think you will find Valetta disimproved by her crisis. It is curious to hear how she and Gillian both declare that Mysie would have prevented it, as if naughtiness or deceit shrank from that child's very face.

'It has been a very happy, successful Christmas-Day, full of rejoicing. May you be feeling the same; that joy has made us one in many a time of separation.

'Your faithful old Brownie,

'J. MOHUN.'

(GILLIAN AGAIN.)

'Bowthorpe,

'*Jan. 20th.*

'DEAREST MAMMA,

'This is a Sunday letter. I am writing it in a beautiful place, more like a drawing-room than a bedroom, and it is all very grand; such long galleries, such quantities of servants, so many people staying in the house, that I should feel quite lost but for Geraldine. We came so late last night, that there was only just time to dress for dinner at eight o'clock. I never dined with so many people before, and they are all staying in the house. I have not learnt half of them yet, though Lady Liddesdale, who is a nice, merry old lady, with grey hair, called her granddaughter, Kitty Somerville, and told her to take care of me, and tell me who they all were. One of them is that Lord Ormersfield, whom Mysie ran against at Rotherwood, and do you know, I very nearly did the same; for there is early Celebration at the little church just across the garden. Kitty talked of calling for me, but I did not make sure, because I heard some one say she was not to go if she had a cold; and when I heard the bell, I grew anxious and started off, and I lost my way, and thought I should never get to the stairs; but just as I was turning back, out

came Lord and Lady Ormersfield. He looks quite young, though he is rather lame—I shall like all lame people, for the sake of Geraldine—and Lady Ormersfield has such a motherly face. He laughed, and said I was not the first person who had lost my way in the labyrinths of passages, so I went on with them, and after all, Kitty was hunting for me! I sat next him at breakfast, and, do you know, he asked me whether I was the sister of a little downright damsel he met at Rotherwood two years ago, and said he had used her truthfulness about the umbrella for a favourite example to his small youngest!

'When I hear of truthfulness I feel a sort of shock. "Oh, if you knew!" I am ready to say, and I grow quite hot. That is what I am really writing about to-day. I never had time after that Christmas-Day at Vale Leston to do more than keep you up to all the doings; but I *did* think: and there were Mr. Harewood's sermons, which had a real sting in them, and a great sweetness besides. I have tried to set some down for you, and that is one reason I did not say more. But to-day, after luncheon, it is very quiet, for Kitty and Constance are gone to their Sunday classes, and the gentlemen and boys are out walking, except Lord Somerville, who has a men's class of his own, and all the old ladies are either in their rooms, or talking in pairs. So I can tell you that I see now that I did not go on in a right spirit with Aunt Jane, and that I did poor Val harm by my example, and went very near deception, for I did not choose to believe that when you said, "If Aunt J. approves," you meant about Alexis White's lessons; so I never told her or Kalliope, and I perceive now that it was not right towards either; for Kally was very unhappy about her not knowing. I am very sorry; I see that I was wrong all round, and that I should have understood it before, if I had examined myself in the way Mr. Harewood dwelt upon in his last Sunday in Advent sermon, and never gone on in such a way.

'I am not going to wait for you now, but shall confess it all to Aunt Jane as soon as I go home, and try to take it as my punishment if she asks a terrible number of questions. Perhaps I shall write it, but it would take such a quantity of explanation, and I don't want Aunt Ada to open the letter, as she does any that come while Aunt Jane is out.

'Please kiss my words, and forgive me, as you read this, dear mamma; I never guessed I was going to be so like Dolores.

'Kitty has come to my door to ask if I should like to come and read something nice and Sundayish with them in her grandmamma's dressing-room.

'So no more from your loving

'GILL.'

(To be continued.)

A PLUNGE INTO TROUBLED WATERS.

BY MISS C. R. COLERIDGE.

Matter of course, matter of choice.

CHAPTER XI.

HUMAN NATURE.

PROBABLY every generation provides its own apparatus for turning heads, which are not fixed steadily on their owners' shoulders; and 'Popular Entertainments,' 'Penny Readings,' and the like are as good a means as balls or picnics for setting them spinning. Lily Woodford had the sort of prettiness which seems unexpectedly refined to people who don't expect refinement in the class below them, and the deferential sweetness of her well-trained manners, added to the skill in dress and deportment which she had learnt at Dulworth, really made her, in her little way, a very charming creature. Nor was there anything coarse in her ways or her ideas, though much that was common-place. She was a well-behaved and modest girl, who studied the proprieties, as a person whose position in life depends on their observance. But she was an ingrained coquette, and admiration was the breath of life to her. She understood by good conduct, the abstaining from bold attempts to gain young men's notice, and the habit of keeping their attentions within due bounds. But of their attentions she constantly thought, and for their notice, she dressed and looked and smiled or abstained from smiling—she practically lived. Of them and their proceedings she talked to her friends, and expected them to talk to her. This code of life is not by any means confined to girls of Lily's class, and is not incompatible with a very proper attention to business duties, and a great liking for religious observances, and to think it wrong and dangerous never occurred to Lily. She could not conceive that any other interest whatever could be compared to the fact that any youth had taken pains to look at her, though she would not have hurried her work or neglected her business, to give him the opportunity. She knew, therefore, quite well that Mr. Cummings sighed for her, and that Mr. Bailey did not, and she did not, oddly enough, at all dislike the serious young schoolmaster. She 'had had thoughts of him,' as she phrased it to herself, until the 'union of classes' put him quite into the shade, by a notice infinitely more exciting than anything she had ever known before. Young Mr. Warren had begun by thinking it showed a delightful freedom from trade

prejudice to be specially polite to his father's employée when he met her on a social occasion. He found politeness very easy and pleasant, and it did not occur to him that Lily never conceived that his attentions were due to anything but her own charms. Things crept on by degrees till, as has been seen, the Popular Entertainments were far from being the only occasions of meeting. The secret was a great burden to Daisy Morris, and Lily's own conscience was very ill at ease. She would have regarded it as quite proper to give up her Bible-class to walk with a young man whose attentions were likely to become serious; Bible-classes being, though desirable, less important than settling in life—a view which the promoters of Bible-classes might sometimes do well to keep in mind; but to neglect it for an intercourse which she knew quite well to be wrong and dangerous, at least to her peace of mind, she felt was not right. She was low-spirited and cross. Daisy made a roundabout attempt to win her confidence; but perhaps was hardly sympathetic enough to do so. She had the temperament, which in another class of life would never have realised the existence of views and feelings like Lily's. Daisy, of course, knew all about it, and deliberately chose to think differently.

In any case, she did Lily no good, and the latter's depression and pettish temper became evident to her uncle, who one Sunday afternoon, being alone with his wife, remarked—

'Missis, I've been observing of Lily. Is there any young man looking her way?'

'Why, what ever makes you think so?' said his wife.

'She carries on as young women do in them circumstances,' said Woodford.

Mrs. Woodford was not a very observant woman; and she was a very trustful one.

'There's young Cummings comes here—pretty often; but Mr. Bailey—I'm pretty sure he's after Miss Morris, who's more his equal than our Lily as to learning.'

'It ain't Cummings—nor Bailey either,' said Woodford. 'Lily's not a girl that's calculated to take care of herself. She'd be a deal better to go as lady's maid, than run about to the work-rooms here. She's uncommon pretty, but her head ain't much.'

'True enough,' said Mrs. Woodford; 'but there's no taking care of girls in a place like this. Lily must come and go; and if I cross her, what is to hinder her from taking another lodging and setting up for herself?'

'She ain't the sort to do that,' said Woodford.

'No,' returned his wife; 'and see how we took care of her at Roseberry, and kept her up. I begin to think if girls must live by themselves, and take care of themselves, they must grow to it young. We'll have to think about it, with Alice and Etty growing up so fast. There's no use in telling Etty she's not to do as others do, unless it's

something downright wrong. I think I'll have to put her in a good strict place, away from here, before she learns her freedom.'

'Well, any way, she'll always respect her mother, which is more than many girls can say,' said Woodford. 'I'll step out and meet Lily as she comes home.'

Woodford was very fond of his pretty niece, who was always loving and pleasant to him, and he did sometimes stroll out to meet her on her return from her Bible-class, along a pretty bit of lane which formed the nearest and pleasantest way.

The days were lengthening, and the winter afternoon was still pleasant as he walked between the bare hedgerows, and listened to a robin's note. Leisure, the quiet road, his best clothes, and the dutiful attention which he had paid to the claims of the holy day, made him sensible of its rest and refreshment. But as he turned round a corner of the lane, he beheld Lily walking with a gentleman whom he did not know. The couple were at some distance, and, instantly as he turned the corner, they parted in haste, and the young man retreated, while Lily advanced with a troubled countenance, but possibly hoping herself hitherto unseen.

'What, uncle, come to meet me?' she said, as she approached.

'I'm taking a stroll in your direction. And, who's your friend, Lily?' said Woodford, as he turned and walked beside her.

'Oh, that—' said Lily, 'that's young Mr. Warren. I've made acquaintance with him at the Entertainments, you know; he's been at college, and hasn't anything to do with the business.'

'It don't appear to me,' said Woodford, 'it don't appear to me, Lily, as how Mrs. Warren would approve of your walking with him in the lanes. And I don't seem to approve of it neither. You can't keep company with Mr. Warren?'

'Oh, uncle, how can you talk so! Of course it's nothing but just acquaintance. Dear me! people have acquaintances in these days without meaning anything but just acquaintance.'

'It ain't in any way belonging to these days, Lily, for young gentlemen to take notice of pretty girls, harmless enough, so I'm not going to use any language about it. But it's a thing that always has led to the passing of remarks, and that always will. And there's two things as I have to say on the point. One is, there's gentlemen whose pleasant words don't matter; and there's gentlemen as are situated so as they *do*. In this case, Lily, it *do*, as you know well yourself. And the other thing is, that though gentlemen may be gentlemen all the world over, if a young woman as respects herself knows as it's just an acquaintance, why, she knows it, and she acts according. Acquaintances don't lead to crying, Lily, nor to low spirits, nor to Sunday walks, regular and frequent.'

Lily was crying by this time pretty hard.

'I wish—I wish I never had made acquaintance,' she said; 'but he took notice, and—and——'

Life looked dreadfully dull, all the other young men she knew dreadfully commonplace beside the 'acquaintance,' and to do the youth justice, as has been said, he had only pursued the matter as a flattering acquaintance, meaning to Lily neither harm nor good.

'If so be as you go where there are chances of making acquaintance, you must learn to act according. There weren't no people's entertainments in my time, nor singing together as there is now, though there was always ways, no doubt, for them as wanted them,' he added honestly. 'And now, Lily, this ain't to go on, and I'd have you to stop at "acquaintance." My niece ain't to make herself a talk.'

Lily was nothing like so headstrong as her cousin Etty was likely to prove; besides, she saw by this time that Mr. Warren intended to stop at acquaintance, so it was well to be beforehand with him. She murmured, 'Yes, uncle,' under her breath, and felt very miserable and helpless, full of hopes and fears, disappointment and dulness, which all came to a climax when she heard in the shop that young Mr. Warren had gone on a trip to the United States with some friends, and would be away for six months. Poor Lily had not a very inflammable nature, and Mr. Warren's attentions had been, after all, unimpassioned in their character, so that no very tragic result came of their cessation. But she suffered notwithstanding, and it was some time before she found Mr. Cumming's unaltered allegiance to be any consolation.

In the meantime young Warren's foolish notice of her had much vexed and annoyed the promoters of the 'Popular Entertainments,' who, as the Rector drily put it, 'had not considered that human nature had existed before any theories for improving it.' The two young curates, to whom he made this remark, naturally felt it hard, and were unprepared with a reply.

'Do you think the entertainments do more harm than good, sir?' said Mr. Anson, in a hurt voice.

'No,' said the Rector; 'but I think they cannot do good without harm. A foolish thing has happened through their means. But remember it is not a wicked one, which, but for such efforts at mutual respect, it might have been.'

Mrs. Woodford was far from arriving at this consolatory conclusion, as she sighed over the effects on Lily of the unlucky 'Populars.'

''Tis very well, Miss Morris,' she said, 'to say that girls should have good sense; but 'tisn't every one that has so much, and there's more in the world than good sense, too.'

Daisy did not see her own way at all so clearly as she could have wished. Mr. Bailey's attentions became far too marked to be overlooked, as the spring went on; and of course the preparations for the entertainments gave an excellent excuse for meeting. She received a great deal of notice also from some of the ladies, and more or less attention from the gentlemen engaged in them, and her good sense had plenty of exercise. What should she do with Mr. Bailey, who

seemed to find it impossible to decide on a reading or a recitation without consulting her. He had even substituted the 'Pied Piper' for the 'Murderer's Groan' at her suggestion. And now one Saturday morning, when she had full time to consider the matter, she received a letter containing an offer of marriage, a little more hopeful than Daisy thought it ought to have been, though the hopes were founded on community of tastes.

It was a very good offer, quite suitable in every respect. The young man's friends were in prosperous and respectable trade; he was making a good income, and was a worthy and well-educated person, who would meet with her mother's approval. But Daisy did not want to marry him at all. She liked her life, and she liked her profession, and she could imagine somebody better than Mr. Bailey. Was she indeed 'above her station'? Was her fastidiousness for good or for evil? The thought of Lily's ambitions struck her as an uncomfortable parody on her own. And then ought she 'to have kept herself to herself' more? Had she really been less reticent and more free than 'a lady' should be? *Were* these amusements unsuitable to a solitary girl who had her living to get?

'But if Mr. Cummings had fancied me,' she thought to herself, 'I suppose he'd have come in to fill the inkbottles and hang up the maps.' And she laughed as she recalled an occasion at home when these delicate attentions had been rendered to her fellow pupil-teacher from the male part of the establishment. Daisy plucked up her spirits and refused Mr. Bailey's offer, very politely and kindly, and with some misgivings, for she was sensible of a certain attraction. But there was much on the other side. The attraction was not strong enough to counterbalance all that would have to be renounced in its favour, that hope of a situation in a training college, that desire to make her mark and do her part in life. Yet Daisy was not at all ignorant of the advantages of being comfortably married, and she felt that she should miss the pleasant discussions as to the entertainments.

Daisy felt rather like the judge, who did not want to hear the evidence on the other side, for fear it should confuse him. A simple view of life would have been so comfortable.

CHAPTER XII.

PAYMENT BY RESULTS.

MEANWHILE the Sunday-school arrangement prospered. Daisy, who was a born teacher, contrived to teach Miss Walters how to keep order, instead of absolutely doing it herself. Her own little class flourished, and Violet Almond, who had set up an enthusiasm for her, was moved to think that attendance at Sunday-school need not be unladylike, and walked down with her in the afternoon. As Violet

was really a well-meaning and refined girl, her presence was an advantage to the class; and the teaching being quite new to her, she found it unexpectedly interesting. Indeed, Miss Walters, being no longer worried by the rest of the school, nor opposed by Alice Woodford, got on much better, and gave livelier lessons. Alice was happier, and Etty, at any rate, received a useful lesson, when one Sunday afternoon Polly Mason walked out of her front gate and joined them.

'I'm coming to St. Michael's,' she said. 'That there Sylvia Gore—I'm not agoing to sit beside *her* any longer. 'Twas she as talked and laughed with the big boys in the passage, till they made such a noise, romping and fighting, that the superintendent came out and said he'd have no more of it, there was a limit, and "Who was it?" says he. "Polly Mason," says she, standing up as straight as you please. And he speaks to me, so I ups and tells him I'm not agoing to be found fault with by no one; the Church school 'll be glad enough to get me, and so here I goes.'

'You mayn't play with the boys at our school, Polly,' said little Susan Woodford, 'nor eat sweets in class, either.'

Daisy had been accustomed to see such recruits received at Flaxby with extreme coolness, and sometimes even refused; but as Polly's little sisters were in the school, she had a sort of right there; and Miss Walters *was* a little inclined to view her presence as a proof that her school was becoming popular.

But Daisy knew very well that girls like Polly rarely get any good from school themselves, and do harm by their influence to others, so that it is never worth while stretching a point to keep them. In this case, however, Etty Woodford, who was not wanting in sense, recalled Polly's extravagant praise of her school, and felt how foolish she would have felt now, if she had been allowed to follow her there.

Perhaps the Congregational superintendent had also been for a holiday, and enlarged and defined his ideas of school-keeping.

Alice Woodford's future was beginning to be considered by her parents. She was not, as her mother said, 'one to knock about;' her turn was for books, her wish to be a teacher; but she was a child to whom care and protection was absolutely needful. 'A nice place in a lady's nursery' seemed to Mrs. Woodford almost the only line which she could like to see Alice take, when Daisy Morris suggested that her mother wanted a pupil-teacher at Flaxby, and would be glad to have a nice girl to board with her.

Alice herself caught at the idea. She had conceived a great enthusiasm for Daisy Morris, and going to Flaxby seemed next best to going back to her dear Roseberry. The vexations she had undergone, and also the serious example of Lotty Benson, had deepened her character, and her thoughts of the next Confirmation preparation went beyond the answering of questions, however careful, or the attendance at classes, however regular. Daisy had shown her

that spiritual religion could come through these things, and perhaps it was well for her that she had learned from Lotty Benson that it was not always confined to them.

She could not but be glad to be confirmed elsewhere than at Dulworth, and when the plan was finally settled, her satisfaction was very great.

One fine afternoon, soon after Easter, Mrs. Woodford had been clearing up her work and setting herself to rights, and presently sat down to her needle and her meditations. As she looked at the chestnut-trees in the road, opening out their great fans, and saw the polyanthuses and auriculas coming out in her garden, her mind went back to the old home, and the spring beauties, to be seen there in so much greater abundance, and forward to a plan for going over at Whitsuntide to see the grandmother and the old place. Should she go herself and take Jem and Sue, or send the father and Etty? For by that time Alice would be established at Flaxby under the care of Mrs. Morris, an arrangement much to her mother's desire.

'I don't see my way to leaving Etty,' she thought; 'but I'd like to see some of the folks there again, dearly.'

She was interrupted by a knock at the door, and when she went to open it beheld a tall, rather more than middle-aged lady, whose handsome face broke into a broad smile of greeting as she held out her hand and said 'Well, Susan, I *am* glad to see you again.'

'Miss Goodall! Miss Beatrice! Oh, ma'am, you are welcome. Do step in and sit down. Dear me, ma'am, it will make the place like home to see you in it.'

'The old Miss Goodall,' as Alice and her contemporaries called her, had left Roseberry to make her home elsewhere when her brother married, but she had frequently visited it, so that she and her old scholar had kept up their intercourse at pretty regular intervals.

It was long, however, since Mrs. Woodford had found much to say to her old teacher but kindly questions and answers as to each other's belongings; but now with all the new interests and ideas that had come upon her, Mrs. Woodford could not help telling her old friend all her difficulties.

When Miss Goodall had explained that she was staying with Mrs. Clavering, and had consented to allow Mrs. Woodford to give her some tea while she waited for the return of the children, all the recent subjects of interest came up for discussion.

Miss Goodall was a handsome woman, with bright, hearty, and yet thoughtful eyes, and Mrs. Woodford's problems had come before herself in various forms already, for her time was chiefly spent in all the variety of modern good works.

'I'm sure, ma'am,' Mrs. Woodford said, 'when first I came here I felt pretty near distracted. There was that number of things to decide upon! And the young people talking and declaring which church and which school they liked best, and criticising of the

clergyman. Ma'am, what should we have thought at home? And yet, I declare, Miss Beatrice, I catch myself doing it too.'

'Yes,' said Miss Goodall, 'it does come to a personal choice being made.'

'And whether to hold them back, ma'am, I cannot tell. Now there's these Popular Entertainments; it *do* seem to me that all this music and reading does put them out of their station, and turn their thoughts from their duties, and bring people together that'd be better apart. Young girls is so foolish, ma'am, and so soon uplifted. And yet it makes us all pleasant evenings, and all the teaching and study seems to lead on to it.'

'Well, Susan, nothing is without its drawbacks. But if you and I look back and think of the life in our village when people *were* left to themselves and to their own station as it is the fashion to say, I think you'll see that they were not without temptations—and of a worse kind than these social gatherings, however mixed, are likely to bring them.'

'Yes, indeed, ma'am, that's so. Mother always said that things were very bad in her young days, and, dear me, I wouldn't have my Alice know some of the tales of the old people I heard when I was young.'

'Yes; bad thoughts and bad talk with no new interests were no safer than the power to read bad books—quite the contrary.'

'Oh, Miss Goodall, I have so believed in getting my children the best of educations, knowing what I owed to all your kindness.'

'Well, you haven't changed your mind, have you, Susan?'

'No, ma'am; and Woodford would put off anything else for it for them. But I may tell you, Miss Goodall, Miss Morris, one of the teachers here, is educated more like a lady than any young person I ever met. She's a real good friend to the girls. But there's a young man as would have been every way suited to her, as I should say, ma'am, and she don't think him up to her mark, and has thrown away her chance, ma'am, of a good husband. Though if he has patience, I wouldn't say what may happen in the future.'

Miss Goodall laughed a little.

'Ah,' she said, 'I'm afraid I don't see a remedy for that difficulty. But we used to be vexed, Susan, when our nice girls married so hastily and foolishly.'

'Oh, yes, ma'am. I hope mine will never do that,' said Mrs. Woodford, perhaps not quite following the train of Miss Goodall's thoughts. 'You see, ma'am, I thought, as we had to live in Dulworth, 'twas no use setting oneself against everything, with young people to bring up.'

'I think that was very wise of you. You give your children good principles—so that they will, I hope, know the true guides, even if they have to make a choice among them.'

'Ah, Miss Goodall, there's another thing,' said Mrs. Woodford,

'and it's what has troubled me the most of all. I wouldn't wish to speak against the ladies here, nor against Mr. Anson, who's proved himself, I'm sure, a most kind gentleman. But it isn't like what we were accustomed to, Miss, and I don't see how my children are to feel what it is to look up as I did.'

'Susan,' said Miss Goodall, leaning forward, and speaking earnestly, 'I know what you mean. I don't believe it is given to every one at all, or to any of us at all times in our life, especially in these critical days, to see in those set over us objects for admiration and hero-worship. That is a help which is not always given—we have to do without it—to learn, I suppose, to look higher. Those saints on earth, which some of us remember, are rare and unusual. Alas, we have to learn to influence others for good in our little way, knowing that we cannot *be* such as our teachers were! It is too much to ask of life in a usual way, to show us our ideals in the flesh, and we mustn't be angry with those who fall short and can't help us in that personal way. Perfect clergymen, perfect teachers, perfectly inspiring leaders are rare; many people have to grow up independently of such influences. Well, then, we can't expect them to have exactly the same tone of mind as if they had met with them—they must form their own characters—with God's help, for themselves. The same feelings cannot exist with no one to draw them out—they must look yet higher.'

Miss Goodall had talked out her own thoughts as she had sometimes done in those far-off days of youth, without quite heeding whether her favourite scholar could follow her or not. Mrs. Woodfood mused a little in silence, she laid by the idea to think over and apply at her leisure. But she looked into the face of her old and faithful friend, who had given her of her best all through life, and she said—

'But when we have, Miss Beatrice—when we have—'tis indeed a thing to be thankful for, and nothing can change it.'

'Nothing, Susan,' said Miss Goodall, emphatically, 'not if we should change ourselves and get wisdom from other sources. I believe such reverences were the way God taught some of us to reverence Him and His goodness. But be sure that He will not fail the age, or the parish, or the person, that He does not see fit to teach in that way.'

(*Concluded.*)

DAGMAR.

CHAPTER V.

'A COUNTRY DINNER.'

'That face
Is pure and meek—a calm and thoughtful eye.
* * * * *
I always mistrust those wall-eyed saints.'
—*The Saint's Tragedy.*

A DINNER at the Tyndals' was always a pleasant affair. The Squire's real good-nature and amusing faculty for making mistakes would have enlivened the dullest party; while as for the rest, Mrs. Tyndal was kindness itself, and Dick and Day, though they professed to despise the whole thing, were too much exhilarated not to be lively and amusing.

When Maurice came down, dressed for the evening of the grand party to be given in his honour, he found the drawing-room, as it were, 'cleared for action;' Agnes seated at the piano playing a waltz, and Dagmar and her boy cousin floating softly round and round the room.

He stood by the piano looking at the pretty sight, smiling, but a little puzzled.

'I did not know it was the custom in England to dance when one gave a dinner,' he said.

'Nor is it!' answered Agnes, with an answering smile. 'Except when you have two children in the house, and they are both quite mad.'

At that moment some one opened the door, and the two floating figures came to a pause. But it was only Raymond.

'Why, Day,' he said, 'this is festive. I have not danced with you since you were in short frocks. Will you give me a turn?'

She turned from Dick and held out her hands frankly, her light foot keeping time to the music with a happy impatience. Maurice looked on, and thought that Raymond's dark face and more manly figure did not add to the charm of the picture, as substituted for Dick's.

'And he dances like—an Englishman!' he said to himself with some scorn. 'Why should he hold himself so stiffly and look so preternaturally miserable? His position is enviable enough.'

Perhaps he was wondering whether it would be possible for himself to succeed to the position; but before Raymond had released his cousin the Squire and Mrs. Tyndal came in, and the knock of the first guest put an end to the impromptu overture.

The first arrival was Mr. Pymont, the clergyman whose 'Papistical' tendencies so grieved Mr. Tyndal, though they could not restrain his exuberant hospitality.

He was a small fair man, with grey eyes set rather close together, and a long jaw; a man who might have been any age between twenty-five and forty-five, but who was probably nearer the latter than the former. His manner was very pleasant, and his voice low and soft. 'Jesuitical,' the Squire was wont to call it, though his ideas of Jesuits were necessarily of the vaguest.

Mr. Tyndal greeted him pleasantly; and then, hardly waiting till he had spoken to his hostess, drew him forward towards Maurice.

'This is Mr. Claughton,' he said; 'you and he ought to find out that you have a good deal in common. I tell him that he has only to go over to your church at Lowthorpe to fancy himself back in one of those places abroad.'

A more unprovoked attack has seldom been made. For this was only Tuesday, and on Sunday Maurice, having been tentatively offered the use of the carriage to attend the Roman Catholic Chapel at Netherton, had emphatically declined it. He had accompanied the Tyndals to the parish church, moreover, and there behaved with all due decorum; though he refused to sit in the great Court pew by himself, and evidently was not familiar with the English Liturgy.

But the Squire had got it into his head that Maurice must necessarily be a 'Papist,' as his forefathers had been, and under that impression still continued, in a confused sort of way, to associate his religious opinions with those of Mr. Pymont.

Mr. Pymont came forward and shook hands, with a look of interest and even of excitement; while Maurice drew himself up a little and looked somewhat blank.

'You take an interest then in foreign churches?' said the clergyman, in that tone of appeal and of almost childlike simplicity, which the Squire felt to be Jesuitical.

'I have seen a good many.'

'Ah! I have not. It is an experience which I have often desired, and which might be very useful. Do our English churches strike you as in any way *wanting*, after your experience of a fuller ritual?'

'I have only seen one English church.'

Such short answers might have disconcerted any one else. But Mr. Pymont was either curiously blunt of perception or utterly indifferent as to whether his questions were or were not welcome.

'No?' he said. 'We have many English churches out of England—not for the most part very favourable specimens, I fear. You belong, I suppose, to the Roman Communion?'

The question was supremely impertinent, but somehow it did not sound so, put in Mr. Pymont's soft indifferent tones, as if it referred to the state of the weather or to the time of day.

Maurice started. 'God forbid!' he exclaimed; and then became

aware that the ejaculation sounded more solemn in English than in the language with which he was most familiar, and laughed. 'No,' he said, looking down at the clergyman's surprised countenance. 'I know too much about it.'

Mr. Pymont looked, if anything, a little disappointed.

'I understood,' he said, 'that your family——'

'Perhaps so,' said Maurice coldly. 'But I was not brought up as a member of the Romish Church, and on the whole my experience of it has not been favourable.'

At this moment several more guests came in, and Mr. Tyndal introduced them to Maurice, who was drawn off into the usual weather discussion, while Mr. Pymont moved on to Dagmar's side, and asked her advice, with much apparent sincerity, as to the management of Sunday-schools. She knew, and he knew that she knew, that he had not the slightest intention of taking advice on that point from any one; but his manner certainly seemed to betoken the most complete faith in her judgment, combined with an absolute distrust of his own.

Dagmar meanwhile was watching Maurice with some curiosity. She was anxious to see how he would get on with these people, who made a little too apparent their desire to find out what he was like. She had fancied from what she had observed, that he did not greatly care for allusions to his father and mother, and to his own strange bringing up and isolated condition. And there was not one of the elderly gentlemen, with whom she had threatened him, but began his introductory speech with something about Maurice's father, or his own long absence from his native country.

But he seemed to bear it very well, and to be, on the whole, much less shy than he had been with them on his first evening.

At dinner Dagmar sat next to Raymond, and frankly told him that she had arranged it so. He was flattered, until she went on with equal frankness to say that it was in order that she might not sit by a special aversion of hers, a certain young Pointer, the son of the Radical Member, who was now divided from her by several couples. Raymond's temper could not quite stand the prominence given to the fortunate hero of the evening, and he was somewhat inclined to carp and be cynical. He sharpened his tongue upon Dagmar's pet illusions till he fairly put her out of temper, and she turned her round white shoulder a little towards him for the rest of the evening. He fancied that it would be easy to make his peace with her again, but found her neither so facile nor so childish as he had expected. It was a false move, he felt, and he chronicled a resolution to be more careful and complaisant for the future.

Meanwhile Dagmar was watching Maurice with a good deal of friendly curiosity, and listening to the general conversation, without any wish to share in it, like an intelligent child.

Agnes was seated at Mr. Claughton's left hand, and was evidently

determined that he should talk, and talk his best. She drew him out without appearing to do so, and interposed her quick wit between him and some of the county magnates, who would otherwise in all good-nature have completely talked him down.

'I was resolved,' she said afterwards to Dagmar, 'that he should not be bullied all the evening about the state of his land and the repairs of his house, and the duties of a landed proprietor. I meant that he should talk of his travels, and give us all a treat.'

Under such delicate handling Maurice came out well, talking with an ease and fluency that reminded Miss Morrison that a tableful of strangers was less strange to him than a small family party. The quaint foreign construction of his remarks gave them a strange piquancy and interest, and kept the whole table listening and amused.

Dagmar was just thinking, with a little curl of the lip, that if one must have a lion at a dinner-party, it was a comfort to find him willing to 'roar as gently as any sucking dove,' when the Squire and Mr. Pymont in one moment spoiled all.

The conversation had reached South America, and Maurice had just described an odd night spent at a Roman Catholic mission-station, when, apropos of a young Indian girl whom the party had met returning from confession, Mr. Pymont began in his gentle impressive way—

'It must be most interesting, to those who have the opportunities to study the question, to ascertain how far the general impression is correct as to the effect of the Roman form of worship upon these unsophisticated races.'

Maurice made no answer, but Mr. Tyndal broke in, in his loud hearty tones—

'Are your people over at Lowthorpe so very unsophisticated? I hear you intend treating them much in the same way. What do you say, Maurice? You know what sort of people go to confession abroad. Do you think that sort of thing is likely to suit English people?'

Maurice smiled.

'Are English people all alike?' he said. 'I have seen a considerable number of varieties, in different parts of the world, and you have a proverb, I believe, "Many men, many minds!"'

'As regards the practice of confession,' went on Mr. Pymont placidly, 'I should be glad to hear, from any one who had had the means of judging, what is its general effect upon people such as the Indians, who are notoriously given to deceit and concealment?'

'No effect at all!' said the Squire, laughing. 'If people tell lies at all, they'll tell them to the priest as glibly as to any one else.'

Mr. Pymont looked at Maurice.

'May I ask if that is your experience? Or do not the most secretive find a relief at times in making a clean breast of all their "perilous stuff"?'

'I do not know,' said Maurice coldly. 'I never went to confession, and I have rarely heard it spoken of.'

'Nay, but,' went on the other, in his impersonal, quietly-persistent tone, 'take your own judgment on the matter. Does it not seem to you that, if a man has committed a crime, the more profoundly secret he keeps it from the world at large, the more he must long to confide it to some safe and secret ear? A man whose guilt is open and patent need not confess, but to one who has the fatal art to hide it, as is the case with many of those down-trodden races, the confessional must seem the only relief.'

The Squire was fidgeting all though the quiet and careful delivery of this speech, partly dissenting from it, partly anxious to put a stop to the discussion before it became a bore.

'I don't believe there is anything in it,' he said abruptly. 'When a man has committed a crime he wants to hide it, not to tell some one.'

'History will hardly bear you out in that,' said Mr. Pymont, with quiet certainty. 'Do not you think, Mr. Claughton, that the impulse to confess is, in such cases, a very real and true one?'

Maurice turned upon him with a sudden flash of the eyes that startled all who saw it, and a hardly-suppressed exclamation in German that would not have been the better for translation.

'. . . How should I know?' he said. 'I have never been to confession, nor would anything induce me to do so.'

His voice was always rather more expressive than English voices generally are, and the irritation and anger in it now were unmistakable. Every one round the table felt a little uncomfortable, or at any rate looked so, except Mr. Pymont. He turned to his next neighbour after a moment, and asked some advice as to the best means of doing without a School Board in a small parish. Agnes glided into conversation with *her* next neighbour, in her tranquil easy fashion, and after a little pause of astonishment, every one else felt it their duty to do the same.

But Maurice's flexible brows were drawn together and his lips set; and there was no making him talk any more. For the rest of the evening, as long as the guests remained, nothing could be got out of him except by direct questioning, and even then only the shortest answers of which courtesy would allow.

When the gentlemen came into the drawing-room, young Pointer found his way at once to Dagmar's side. This rather empty-headed youth was consumed by a hopeless passion which owed its origin to one happy day when half the county families went out for a picnic together. He had not been too proud to own himself a boy then, and to consort with Dick; and Dagmar had enjoyed herself with them both, half-queen, half-playfellow, all through the long sunny day. But the next time they met he had begun to fancy himself a man, and to think that she supposed him one.

He devoted himself to her as he imagined that men of the world devoted themselves to the ladies whom they delighted to honour, and ever since then she had disliked him vehemently.

He was somewhat less objectionable to-night than usual, for he could do nothing but talk about 'Mr. Claughton.'

He had conceived for him, at first sight, one of those headlong friendships into which young men are prone to fall, and though, as far as Dagmar could make out, Maurice had not addressed more than two words to him, yet these seemed to have been enough.

He prattled on of Mr. Claughton's experience, and wisdom, and knowledge of the world, while Dagmar looked across at the hero as he stood beside the fireplace, and thought that he looked, if anything, decidedly sulky.

If it was so, sulky he remained till the last guest had taken his departure. Then he suddenly threw off his silence and sullenness, and, as the party stood round the fire discussing the guests, contributed more than his share of half-laughing, good-natured criticism.

'What do you think of Mr. Pymont?' asked Agnes, with a keen veiled glance from her brown eyes.

'I do not like him—I cannot bear him,' he answered hotly, though still as half in jest. 'I have seen men like him before, and they do no good—no!'

'I believe he is a particularly good man,' said Mrs. Tyndal in her gentle tones. 'He is positively devoted to his parish.'

'He looks like a good man,' said Agnes thoughtfully, and Maurice shook his head, with a little movement of the shoulders that said, 'I should be sorry to think so!'

'He is a "*wall-eyed saint!*"' said Dagmar, in a tone that seemed intended to end the discussion; and she went quietly away before her mother had time to ask what was meant by so extraordinary an epithet.

The day of the dinner-party had been tolerably fine, but more autumnal than any previous one that year. The next morning the rain was streaming down and the wind dashing it in sheets against the windows. Maurice was claimed by the Squire immediately after breakfast, and shut up with him in the library to undergo a morning of accounts, Mr. Tyndal being naturally anxious to hand over the charge of all the business which he had undertaken for the young owner of the Court, and to make him clearly understand in what state things were left.

Maurice went with him gravely, and without the look of amused resignation which some one had half-expected of him. Dick and Dagmar vanished to some haunt of their own, and Mrs. Tyndal went to interview her housekeeper. Raymond and Agnes were, to all appearance, to spend the morning *tête-à-tête*.

Agnes sat at her work, drawing the dainty silken threads in and out, without much apparent interest, and Raymond read the paper,

threw it down and took it up again, walked to the window and looked out upon the drenched trees swaying in the wind. He wanted to talk, he was nervously aware that silence looked awkward, and yet old memories stirred so strongly within him, that he could find nothing to say that did not begin with "*Do you remember?*"'

But happily for him he was in no palace of truth, and was no way bound to speak out his thoughts.

Agnes matched a strand of silk, and said quietly—

'What do you think of Mr. Claughton, Raymond?'

If he had been in the palace before alluded to he must have answered: '*He is an annoyance to me. I am tired of being here, under present circumstances, but I dare not go away and leave him in undisturbed possession of the field.*'

Being free to say what he chose, he answered dreamily: 'Oh! I like him well enough; but he is rather peculiar. I think sometimes he is a little *queer*. Was there ever anything of that sort in the family?'

'I don't know. The Claughtons have never been quite like other people. But he does not follow the family traditions in one respect at least. He is certainly very strongly prejudiced against the Church his father belonged to.'

'Perhaps his mother was a Protestant. And French Protestants are very much so, aren't they?'

'I believe so. But do you notice the self-restrained, almost Puritanical way he has of speaking of his former life—his school and college days—as if he had been rather a wild boy, and feared to shock us by revealing it.'

'Yes! perhaps I have. But the most noticeable peculiarity is his straining after accuracy. When I say I have seen a thing "hundreds of times," I expect him to catch me up, as he does himself, and say "*Not hundreds exactly, but perhaps one hundred and ninety-eight times!*"'

Agnes laughed. She knew that they were only expatiating on this subject to keep themselves from trenching on others that might lead to awkwardness; but she was very well content to have it so.

'Not quite so bad as that,' she said; 'but he is more careful of speech than most people. Perhaps it is the effect of speaking in what is to him practically a foreign language.'

'It seems to me more as if he had been given to lying, at one time or another, and was trying to cure himself of it.'

Raymond spoke with the most complete indolence and indifference, still watching the soft slanting descent of the rain.

Agnes lifted her head with a sudden start and contraction of the brows, like one struck with a new idea.

'It seems to me——' she said, and then stopped short, thinking.

They had been discussing poor Maurice Claughton with as much impersonal freedom as if he had been a character in a novel, and she had been on the point of saying that his manner gave her more the

impression of a naturally truthful person who had once deliberately and wilfully told a great falsehood, and lived ever after with the consciousness of the taint of it, and a dread of its spreading. But suddenly it struck her as somewhat unfair to be imputing motives and actions in this way to one of whose real character they knew so little, and with the thought she involuntarily recalled the scene at the dinner-table the night before. She did not want Raymond to put the two together, even though she had done so. What if Maurice had winced under Mr. Pymont's injudicious pressure as if he had some secret which made the mere thought of confession unpleasant to him? So have most men, and it is only those who are perfect in deception who can appear to have nothing to hide.

Raymond looked round as if wondering why she did not finish her sentence.

'Do you remember young Fielding?' she said with a soft half-laugh. 'He had, I think, what you might call "a habit of lying," but they were the most harmless and obvious of lies. And when he wished very much to be believed he used to say, "Pon honour now, and no humbug, don't you know!"'

'I remember. But that formula used to preface some statements that tried one's powers of belief somewhat severely.'

Raymond winced a little secretly as he answered. For young Fielding's good-natured vacant face was inseparably connected with that time upon which he was so unwilling to look back—the time of their engagement.

He was staying more than once in the house where they too were staying, and was always bursting in upon them at inappropriate moments—making a third in their walks—and adding to his offences by profuse apologies, well-meant but ill-timed.

Raymond turned from the blurred rainy landscape and looked at Agnes. How old she was getting! It was a long while, certainly, since those bright days of their engagement; but there were some ladies of his acquaintance who still looked much the same as they had done then. And Agnes had changed from a girl into a woman—and not even a particularly young woman—had gained every charm that a woman need have, and had lost those of youth and beauty for ever.

'She would have looked older if we had been married,' he said to himself. 'And she would not have been so well-dressed. Women are always ugly, after their first youth, if they are poor.'

'Do you know where Day is?' he asked aloud.

'In what *was* the schoolroom, probably. She and Dick make that their haunt upon wet days.'

'I shall go and see what they are about. Day's ideas of useful and interesting employment must needs be original.'

He sauntered from the room as he spoke. He did really want to go and see Dagmar; to turn the current of his thoughts from the

old love to the new; but he would have been better pleased not to have found Dick there.

That lively young gentleman seriously added to the difficulties of a by no means easy task. Dagmar Tyndal *could* seem, at times, so soft and sweet and womanly that to woo her was pure pleasure; but those moods were rare and fleeting.

She was always liable to change, as it were, at a moment's notice, from a romantic, even tender-hearted girl, into a mocking, unsentimental, quick-witted boy; and Dick's appearance on the scene was always the signal for the change.

It was not she who changed her mood, the mood changed *her;* and Raymond could not even flatter himself that there was any coquetry in the dainty elvish malice with which she tormented him at these times.

The two were sitting by the large ink-stained table in the old schoolroom, which had been Dagmar's a few years back, and where Dick now did his lessons.

They were busy over some occult affair in wood and wire, at which Raymond looked in uncomprehending wonder, and seemed almost too busy at first to pay any attention to him.

'What are you making?' he asked, as he strolled round the room which had been so familiar to him once, languidly studying the contents of the well-filled untidy bookshelves.

'A mouse-trap!' answered Dagmar, with a wicked glance that made Dick give a sudden snort of ill-suppressed laughter.

'No! not really?' said Raymond, with a slight shudder. 'Hallo, here's one of my old favourites, "The Cruise of the Midge." I have not thought of it since I was Dick's age; but I used to be awfully fond of it then.'

'You had better renew your acquaintance with it now,' said Day, and she bored a hole in a tiny piece of wood, and fitted a peg to it with accuracy, chanting softly to herself—

'Oh! we be three poor mariners,
Newly come from the seas;
We spend our lives in jeopardie
While others live at ease.'

'Thank you! You might as well offer me a slab of toffee to match that which I saw Dick devouring yesterday.'

'I will if you like,' she answered demurely, leaning back to open a cupboard behind her, and reaching from it a large dish half full of almond-rock of a very home-made appearance.

Raymond recoiled in some dismay, as she held it towards him; but she tossed a piece to Dick, with a caution not to mistake it for the Russian glue, and set her own pretty white teeth into another piece, with an air of enjoyment purposely pronounced.

'Really,' she said, 'if our entertainment is so little to your taste, you had better have stayed in some more civilised region. Did you find no one in the morning-room?'

'Agnes was there, but I preferred coming here. I was always fond of this old schoolroom. I used to work here occasionally in that long summer that I spent here, when you were a tiny little creature in short frocks, reading words of three letters in a high chair by that table.'

'Yes, I can just remember. Agnes was here then, and she used to do German and French with Miss Spence. Poor Miss Spence! I remember how annoyed she used to be, because she felt sure that you were wasting your time, and studying in a desultory fashion—and you were beyond her jurisdiction.'

'There are a lot of boys' books here,' said Raymond, still keeping his face towards the bookshelf. 'This seems to be Dick's domain, rather than yours.'

'No, indeed! Those are all mine, every one of them. Michael Scott, Marryatt, Cooper, and all.'

Raymond looked over the well-worn volumes, smiling. He knew nothing, even in literature, of the healthy, omnivorous appetite of a creature so happily constituted as Dagmar, and he was even more surprised as he looked at the shelf above, where stood a goodly array of poets, all in the easy undress of old and familiar friends.

The rain fell steadily against the window-pane, Dick polished and cut and glued in absorbed silence, and Dagmar twisted off short lengths of wire with a pair of pincers, and sang, half under her breath—

'Come, rede me my riddle, dear mother (he said),
And rede it me all in one;
Whether I shall wed with faire Ellinor,
And let the brown girl alone.'

'Dick, that corner isn't square!'

'Oh, isn't it, though?' cried the boy, surveying his work in dismay.

'Not a bit of it! Get my set-square out of that drawer behind you and look.'

'The brown girl she has got houses and lands,
Fair Ellinor she has got none;
Wherefore, I charge you, upon my blessing,
Bring me the brown girl home.'

Raymond shut up the book at which he was looking with an impatient gesture, and came to a seat by the table.

'What *is* that thing you are toiling at so busily?' he asked.

'It started in life with the ambition of becoming a bird-cage,' answered Dagmar gravely. 'Whether it will ever realise that ideal or not, I cannot tell. Oh, Dick, you are an owl! Don't you see that those two sides cannot by any possibility come together properly?'

'*I* don't know what possesses the thing!' sighed Dick, giving it up into his cousin's hand.

She bent her pretty brows over it, mechanically going on with her 'doleful ditty,' while Raymond looked at her half-amused, half-provoked, at the impossibility of making her sensible of his attentions.

'Is this your bride, Lord Thomas? (she sayd)
Methinks she looks wondrous browne.

'Give me the knife, Dick; this corner must be cut to fit.'

'*Wondrous browne?*' thought Raymond. 'No! No one will ever say that *I* have married for money. In a few years' time this face will be more than a sufficient excuse for any act of folly. And I, unfortunately, am no longer capable of committing an act of folly; we grow so wise as we grow old!'

'I shan't offer to assist,' he said aloud, in his laziest tone. 'I was never good at that kind of thing. Isn't it—less trouble—to buy your bird-cages ready made?'

'Possibly. It certainly costs less!' answered Dagmar coolly; and there was another pause.

'Despise her not, faire Ellin (he sayd),
Despise her not unto me,
For better I love thy little finger
Than all her whole bodie.'

In the middle of this *chanson* the knife slipped, but Day, with characteristic pride, completed it with more than usual clearness. Then she remarked composedly—

'Talking of fingers, I have cut mine.'

'I should think you have!' cried Raymond indignantly, springing up and taking possession of the little brown hand. 'Dick! go and fetch something to bind it up with—and be quick about it.'

'It is nothing to mind,' said she; but she stood still and let him hold her hand, lightly but firmly, to check the little wound from bleeding.

'Why don't you let Dick do the rough part of the work?' he asked, still indignant.

'He would only cut himself much more often than I do.'

'Better for him to chop his hands to pieces than for you. What was that you were singing just now—

'"Better I love thy little finger,
Than all——?"'

They were standing close together; her hand, by the exigencies of the situation, surrendered to both of his; and he looked at her with something more like passion in his eyes than had been there for years, and yet, even then, in the bottom of his heart, he was remembering that it was to his *first* love that the ballad-hero spoke those impassioned words.

Dick came bouncing into the room, with old linen enough—begged from the housekeeper—to have bound up the wounds of a regiment that had been in action, and Raymond bound up the little wounded finger with an air of proprietorship that was half provoking to the real owner thereof.

'Do be more careful another time,' he said. 'You might hurt yourself in good earnest some day, and you can't suppose all this carpentering business is worth such a risk.'

Dagmar thanked him, but made no promises, and did not laugh at him, which was perhaps more surprising.

Perhaps she was too much 'taken back,' for before her cousin relinquished the little ill-used hand he lifted it to his lips, more with the air of one who takes payment than one who solaces a childish injury, with 'a kiss to make it well.'

The rain did not abate; but after luncheon Maurice Claughton put on his macintosh and faced the elements. He was not accustomed to spending the whole day indoors, and had already perhaps had enough of the Squire's company and advice, while the rest of the party had all letters to write, except Dagmar, who had disappeared, and Dick, who was buried in a book.

So Maurice went out, and up the road towards the Court. He must by this time have got over his nervous shrinking from the deserted home of his ancestors, or he would never have cared to face it on such a day as this, when the wind sighed through the deserted rooms, and spots of damp came out everywhere like ineffaceable bloodstains, and even the little cheery room that Dagmar had approved looked a very temple of dreariness.

He walked through the rooms, making another tour of inspection, with more care and more personal interest than he had shown upon the former occasion. But there was an odd questioning look upon his face all the while. He might have been debating with himself whether it had been wise to have left the sunny foreign shores for this.

He went into the garden and greenhouses, and stood about a long while in the rain, talking to the gardener and planning alterations. Then he went out into the park and up into the hanging woods above the house—woods that to-day were wrapped in mist, with every decaying leaf heavy with clinging raindrops.

Maurice splashed on, unheeding discomfort, perhaps not feeling it. Of all things he hated to feel himself a coward, and he was conscious now of having been one. Carefully as he had inspected the house he had not entered the large drawing-room, nor so much as opened its door, from sheer unwillingness to meet the eyes of that portrait of his father that hung above the tall carved mantelshelf.

'This is pure unreason!' he said to himself impatiently. 'Next time I will go in there, and face it, and have done with it once for all.'

He turned downwards to get out of the wood, and struck into a winding sandy road, that led steeply down the outer ridge of the hill, skirted the churchyard, and so went downward to the village.

He was striding along, aware of being in the right direction, and careless of how long the way might be, so long as it gave him leisure

for thought, when turning a corner he came suddenly upon Dagmar Tyndal.

She was dressed in a long white macintosh, shining with rain, with a large loose hood drawn partly over her head. She carried an umbrella, apparently as a sort of compliment to the elements, for though it was open it was tilted backwards over her shoulders till the rain splashed unchecked against her glowing cheeks and the brown waves of her hair. And in her face was that look of dreamy enjoyment that was perhaps its prevailing expression. She was thinking of some poetical and apt description of just such a day and scene; and was so happy in it that twice as much wind and rain would by no means have discomposed her.

'*You* here?' said Maurice, in surprise. 'But will you not get wet?'

'Not very. By no means so wet as you are at this moment.'

'Oh! I have been through the woods,' said Maurice, turning back to walk by her side. 'But you, where are you going?'

'To the church,' she answered, showing him the basket that she carried on her arm, a rough brown basket filled with single dahlias and glowing with colour. 'It is a Saint's day to-morrow,' she went on, taking out one or two of the topmost flowers and shaking the moisture from them. 'And Mr. Layton likes the flowers to be kept fresh for Saints' days and Sundays; so I go up and look to them.'

'Even in the rain?'

'It does not always rain. And if it did I don't think I should much mind.'

'Perhaps not,' said Maurice, smiling. 'I have found out already that you are one of the happy people who enjoy everything.'

Dagmar opened her eyes. She was so young that she had no opinions concerning herself, only surmises. And every expression of other people's opinion was highly interesting to her, so long as it seemed truthful and not too complimentary.

'I don't know!' she said meditatively. 'I enjoy pleasant things, of course, but there is nothing remarkable in that; and as for the *unpleasant*——'

Maurice laughed.

'Oh, Miss Tyndal, you know little indeed of the world if you think that most people enjoy pleasant things. All my life I have had to do with people who were travelling for their pleasure, and they say that foreign travel is pleasant—yes! But I have seen very few who condescended to enjoy themselves, and fewer still who permitted themselves to look as if they did.'

He was struggling with the gate that opened from the road into the churchyard as he spoke, and to Dagmar's surprise he followed her through it, and up the gravelled path towards the church.

They opened the heavy door, and entered the church, dim and somewhat oppressive-looking in the grey rainy light.

Dagmar went up to the altar, took off the brazen vases, and carried

them into the tiny vestry, while Maurice walked noiselessly about with his hat in his hand, looking at the quaint old monuments that disfigured the walls.

Presently as she arranged and rearranged she was aware that he had found his way after her, and was standing near her and looking silently on.

'Have you plenty of flowers?' he asked, as she half turned her head. 'Remember the greenhouses are close at hand, and I shall never feel that I am really master here till I have gathered some of the fruits of my land.'

'I *should* like another fern or two,' she answered, looking critically at her handiwork. 'But for the Court greenhouses to pay toll to the church will be something new.'

'Change is good for all of us,' he answered sententiously, and departed, coming back in a few moments with a huge handful of ferns, at the sight of which Dagmar exclaimed in dismay—

'Oh, how could you cut those lovely things so recklessly? Simpson will be awfully angry.'

'It matters very little, I think, whether he is angry or not,' answered Maurice composedly. 'And the things are common enough, are they not? It seems to me that I have seen acres of them.'

'Perhaps so, but not in England. We have ferns in plenty about here, but very poor and common compared with these.'

'Those I see in the lanes seem to me just as pretty,' he answered, in a self-justifying tone, as Dagmar with a dismayed look disentangled the handful so roughly gathered. 'Believe me, it is quite a mistake to think that foreign productions are any better than English ones.'

'Do you really think so?' she asked doubtfully. 'You ought to know, but——'

'I believe that England is the finest country it the world,' he broke in earnestly, leaning against the surplice cupboard and looking down upon her. 'Yes, and as far as I have seen the most beautiful!'

Dagmar made a little exclamation of surprise.

'I am sorry for that,' she said soberly; 'I have seen no country but England at present, and I have been looking forward to seeing many more beautiful countries. How surprised you must have been, then, when you first came to England.'

'No!' he answered. 'I had always known what it was like; that it was the fairest, most orderly, and most blessed land in the world.'

'Then why did you stay away from it so long?'

Dagmar spoke upon impulse, as she very often did, and repented the instant the words were out of her mouth. The swift colour dyed her face and neck crimson almost before her brain had time to realise that she had asked an unwarrantable question.

Maurice must have seen her confusion, but he took no notice of it.

'There were—many reasons,' he said, half abstractedly, looking through the small leaded panes of the vestry window. 'My exile

was happy enough—if it *was* exile—and I always felt it so. And there was—some one—who did not wish me to come.'

It was the nearest approach he had ever made to speaking of his dead friend, and Dagmar looked up with a little thrill of interest. His eyes met hers for an instant with an eloquent wistful glance, that seemed to say, as the eyes of dogs do at times, '*I would speak out if I could.*' Then he recovered himself suddenly and half turned away.

'At first, when I was a boy,' he went on, 'I used to think of England as of the Terrestrial Paradise, a delightsome land, but not one to be visited at will. Of late I have always known that I could come when I would, and that when I came I ought to stay—for a time at least. So there was always something to be done first, or some place to be seen; and but for your father's urgent letter, which brought on a sudden virtuous resolution, I should not have been here now.'

'I have done!' said Dagmar, caressing the delicate fronds into shape with dainty finger-tips. 'And here are half your spoils not used. I shall take them home with me.'

She carried the vases back into their place, standing for a moment before the altar in the dim light that filtered through the dark-stained window. Maurice stood below the chancel steps and looked up at her, dangling her basket upon his finger and waiting very contentedly.

'That is a very hideous piece of work, that window,' he said softly, as they went down the church together. 'Is your priest a man of no taste, or how does he contrive to endure it?'

'He has very good taste, I believe. But he knows that things which cannot be cured must be endured; and that there are many things in this dear old edifice which must be attended to before anything can be done to that window.'

'Is it a question of money, then?'

'Well, yes! You see, Mr. Layton is not rich, and there are not many people in the village who have money to spare. Moreover, I believe the chancel belongs to you.'

'To me? Oh, yes! I think I did hear something about it. I will rebuild it for him if he likes.'

'Not on any account,' cried Dagmar vivaciously. 'You may put in new seats if you like; but I will never forgive you if you touch those venerable old walls.'

Maurice laughed, and put his strong hand to steady the umbrella against the driving wind and rain. They went on down the road, between the dripping hedges and the walls dark with wet, talking fast and confidentially, and making plans for the perfect restoration of the little old church.

Meanwhile, Mr. Tyndal had not been without his perplexities. As he sat alone in his study that afternoon, word was brought that

some one wished to speak to him, and after a moment Simpson, the head gardener at the Court, was ushered in.

He was an honest, obstinate, pragmatical individual, with a long upper lip and long receding chin, whose worst fault was a rooted objection to work of any kind, which not even his real skill and sincere good intentions could always overcome.

He stood twisting his hat, and nervously rejecting the chair which Mr. Tyndal pointed out to him.

'I've come to you in trouble, Squire; and I don't know as you or any one else can do much for me, but maybe you can give me to understand the reason of it all, for *I* know no more than the babe unborn. It's the young master, sir—Mr. Claughton. I don't know what kind of gardening he's been used to in foreign parts—nothing so very remarkable, by all accounts. But he's not satisfied with *mine*, howsomever, and he's given me notice to go.'

Mr. Tyndal felt not only astonished, but guilty. For he had said to Maurice more than once, 'If you take my advice you'll get rid of that thick-headed Simpson.' But he had never thought that Maurice would act upon the advice. He was always saying such things, in moments of irritation, and neither he nor any one else about him ever expected them to be acted upon. He inwardly reviled himself for a meddling old fool, while Simpson maundered on about the length of time he had been at the Court, and the honesty with which he had always accounted for the garden produce.

But after all, thought the Squire, it was an amiable trait in the young man's character to be so ready to take advice, and doubtless it would be all right when he had convinced Maurice that he had not intended his words to be taken *au pied de la lettre*.

He spoke in as consoling a tone as he could venture upon without committing himself too explicitly, and at last Simpson talked himself out of the room. Mr. Tyndal waited till he was gone, then crossed the hall to the drawing-room to pour out his perplexities to his wife, as usual, and to inquire after Maurice Claughton's whereabouts.

Mrs. Tyndal was sitting alone, the cups for afternoon tea set out before her, and the teapot muffled in velvet, wadding, and embroidery, to keep the tea warm till some one else should come and drink it.

But before the Squire had had time to speak of what was in his mind there was a sound of voices in the hall, and in a moment the door opened and Raymond came in.

His was not a very expressive face, but it was very apparent for the moment that something had just put him out. He answered his aunt's offer of tea with an evident effort to speak as usual, and stood on the hearthrug frowning like a thunder-cloud. Gentle Mrs. Tyndal looked at him pityingly, and wondered what had annoyed him; but if she had been in the hall a moment before and seen the cause of his annoyance, she would have been no wiser. Only the great door opening and admitting two healthy, happy-looking, hand-

some young people, with glowing faces and dripping garments, and tongues going with unusual rapidity.

Agnes Morrison, pale and rather worn-looking from a day of letter-writing, came forward from the inner drawing-room just as Maurice entered from the hall, his dark face touched with unwonted colour, and a light in his wonderful golden-hazel eyes.

He left the door open behind him, and they could hear Dagmar, going singing upstairs, as was her wont—

'Oh, where have you been, my long, long love,
This long seven years and more?
Oh, I've come to claim your former vows
Ye granted me before.'

(To be continued.)

CAMEOS FROM ENGLISH HISTORY.

CAMEO CCXLVII.

1667–1670.

THE CABAL.

The self-worship of such a man as Louis XIV. could not but include love of glory, as he and his people termed lust of conquest. His mediation between England and Holland had been for no humane end, but in order to obtain allies for purposes of his own.

France had always cast a covetous eye upon the corner of land between the Alps and the sea, which formed her only exposed side, and most of which had belonged to the great Valois Dukes of Burgundy, and from them had passed to the sovereign of Spain. The northern portion had revolted, and established itself as the Seven United Provinces; but the southern had either been faithful to Spain, or had been reconquered, and was as zealously Roman Catholic as the provinces were Calvinistic. It was on this region that Louis fixed his attention. His father-in-law, Philip IV. of Spain, had died on the 17th of September, 1665, leaving, besides his two daughters by his first marriage—the Queen of France and Empress of Austria—one son by his second wife, Mariana of Austria. The poor child, Carlos, was only four years old, had a soft skull, had not cut his teeth, and could neither speak nor walk. His mother was a woman of little capacity, and the power of Spain had been ebbing ever since the death of Philip II., while France had advanced in strength, and Louis was resolved on a further enterprise.

An old edict in Brabant, made to discourage second marriages, gave the inheritance to the daughter of the first wife in preference to the son of the second; and although at her marriage, Marie Therèse had solemnly renounced all claim to her father's succession, Louis was determined to claim the coveted Flemish and Brabantine territory in her right.

He had sounded De Witt, and finding him alarmed at the notion of having France so near a neighbour, deceived him by talking of a free Catholic Confederacy of the ten Belgian provinces. To arrange matters with England, Louis sent his aunt, Queen Henrietta, on a visit to her son, and the two kings corresponded under cover to her, finally agreeing that in consideration of a subsidy from France, enabling him to be independent of his Parliament, Charles should abstain for one year from assisting Spain, when Louis should put his designs into execution. This was kept secret when the Treaty of

Breda was signed, and all that was there openly done was the surrender of conquests on each side in America.

The Spanish Government knew nothing of all this; and the Viceroy of the Netherlands, the Marquis of Castel Rodrigo, had only 7000 or 8000 men under his command, when in May, 1667, with an army directed by Turenne, Louis made his attack, taking fortress after fortress. All his Court went with him in State carriages, Queen, Mademoiselle de la Vallière, the Duchess of Orleans, and all, as far as Compiègne, and Louis rode about in splendid uniform, with a glittering staff of nobles, the admired of all beholders. Douai, Oudenarde, Courtrai, Lille, had to surrender one after the other before the approach of winter sent home the gay Court party, leaving Turenne to hold the territory so easily gained.

There was much alarm at the rapid conquest throughout Europe, and in England a great deal of discontent and displeasure. The vicious indulgences of the King justly shocked the right minded, the severity against the Nonconformists alienated all who pitied them, and distress caused by the national misfortunes, could not but aggravate all feelings of opposition, and, above all, the insult to the navy was bitterly felt and charged upon the Government.

It was on the Lord Chancellor Clarendon that the general hatred directed itself. He and the King seem to have intended to play the parts of Sully and Henri IV.; they were on excellent terms; and there is a series of notes preserved in the Bodleian Library which passed between them when Clarendon was sitting in the House of Lords, and sent up questions to which the King scrawled an answer. Sometimes a rejoinder follows. Clarendon's in the old English hand, Charles's in the flowing Italian. It is like hearing them converse, more especially as we can trace when the King was perplexed, by the great spider he has drawn in a blot of ink at the bottom of his paper!

Clarendon was grave, solemn, and pompous in manner, a very strong Royalist, and extremely saving, not to say grasping, both for the State and himself, and thus he made many enemies. The courtiers laughed at him, and derided his serious, haughty tone, and the King made merry with them, but still trusted the old statesman more than any of them. Especially hostile to him were Lady Castlemaine, who knew what he thought of her, and the Duke of Buckingham.

This nobleman had much of the beauty and personal fascination of his father, the favourite of the two last Kings, and was more dissipated. He had been the companion of Charles in his wanderings, and on the Restoration, had married the only daughter and heiress of Lord Fairfax, the Puritan General. He would not insult this lady by making her visit Lady Castlemaine, and that violent woman had therefore a furious quarrel with him. He began intriguing with some of the disaffected, but was betrayed, and had to escape from

London to avoid being sent to the Tower. Probably it was while in exile in Yorkshire, and finding it very dull, that he uttered his famous malediction on a troublesome dog, 'Cur that you are, I wish you was married and lived in the country!'

However, his accuser died, he made his peace with Lady Castlemaine, and was welcomed back by the King. At once he and his friends, Shaftesbury, Arlington, Albemarle, and all who hated the Chancellor, began to beset the King with accusations. They pointed to the grand house he had completed to prove that he had been bribed, and had helped himself to the money for the sale of Dunkirk; they declared that he wanted to ruin the Constitution; Tangier had been given up as too expensive—this was also said to be an account of bribery; and that in order that his own grandchildren might inherit the throne, he had induced the King to marry a sickly girl unlikely to have children.

The mob broke his windows, and painted a gibbet on the gate with this rhyme—

'Three sights to be seen,
Dunkirk, Tangier and a barren Queen.'

Even Andrew Marvel wrote the scurrilous epigram on his having purchased some of the materials of old St. Paul's—

'Here lie the sacred bones
Of Paul beguiled of his stones.
Here lie golden briberies,
The price of ruined families.
The Cavaliers' debenture well,
Fixed on an eccentric basis.
Here's Dunkirk town and Tangier Hall,
The Queen's marriage and all,
The Dutchman's *templum pacis*.'

Charles stood out for a good while, though Clarendon had often rebuked him for his evil courses, so that the ladies used to exclaim, when they saw the Chancellor approach, 'Here comes your schoolmaster.'

A mocking procession was got up, in which Buckingham represented the stately Chancellor marching to the Court of Chancery, Colonel Titus strutting before him with the fire-shovel over his shoulder as the mace, and another of these buffoons carrying the bellows by way of purse.

Charles laughed heartily, but the discontent of the country was all turning against the Chancellor. The Dissenters hated him for his severities, the narrower Churchmen for not being more severe, and the Romanists for preventing the King's indulgence to them; and Charles at last was turned against him by finding that he had given fatherly counsel to the beautiful, thoughtless Frances Theresa, *la belle* Stuart. Charles was enough in love with her to have actually consulted Archbishop Sheldon on the possibility of divorcing poor

Catharine, and the Archbishop warned the Chancellor. Frances, already frightened at her position, had declared that she would marry any honourable gentleman who had £1500 a year, and Clarendon encouraged the young Duke of Richmond to wed her privately and carry her off from Court, where she left a letter for the Queen, imploring her pardon for any vexations she might have caused, and for the King all the few jewels she had accepted from him.

As a Christian and a statesman, Clarendon had acted wisely; but the depraved minds of his enemies believed it had been with a view to his own grandchildren, among whom there was now another boy. In the midst of these anxieties, Lady Clarendon died at Tonbridge, and a few days later, Charles sent for the Chancellor and requested him to resign the Great Seal, as if voluntarily, to content the Parliament.

Clarendon said that of course he would humbly give it up; but that he could not resign it merely at the bidding of the Parliament. The King said he could not dispute with the Parliament, and was himself at their mercy; on which the Chancellor gave him a lecture on his letting himself be bullied by his Parliament, to which Charles listened favourably; but when Clarendon came to complain of his listening to 'the lady,' the King showed himself less pleased.

The Duke of York was doing all he could for his father-in-law; but the nobles set upon Charles, and told him he had gone too far to recede, and was as much in awe of the Chancellor as a child of his tutor. Lady Castlemaine 'hectored the King nearly out of his wits,' and actually made him ask forgiveness on his knees, and send off the Secretary of State to demand the Great Seal. Clarendon was actually sealing the Treaty of Breda with it when he thus delivered it up, and on its being brought in, one of the courtiers, named May, embraced Charles's knees, exclaiming, 'Sir, you are now a king.'

Many right-minded and honourable men among them, such as Evelyn and Ashburnham, continued to manifest their esteem for Clarendon; but the cry was strong against him, especially because he had favoured the importation of Irish cattle, which the country squires fancied an injury to their interests. When Parliament met, it was with a determination to prosecute him, and an indictment was made out, chiefly respecting the supposed misdirection of public money. The Lords, however, would not agree to the indictment, at which the Commons were greatly angered, and in the midst of the dispute, the proposal was made that Clarendon should leave the country. He asked for a pass from the King, lest he should be arrested on the way. Charles was afraid to give it, but passed his word that all should be safe on the way, and even went to the Duke of York, who had only just recovered from the small-pox, to beg him to persuade his father-in-law to be gone, for, if the Commons insisted, it might be made impossible to save him.

Accordingly Clarendon departed on the 29th of November, 1667,

embarking at Erith for France. He was very ill at Calais, and at Evreux was nearly killed by a party of English seamen, employed in the French service, who fancied him accountable for their arrears of pay. They actually stunned him, and were going to have hanged him, when he was rescued by the French authorities. He took up his abode at Montpellier, where he worked at his admirable history of the Rebellion, which he had already begun, and which he followed up with the history of his own time. After seven years he removed to Rouen, and petitioned the King for permission to die at home; but he received no answer. His eldest son came to be with him, and he died at Rouen, on the 4th of January, 1675. He was buried in Westminster Abbey in Henry VII.'s chapel, probably on account of his connection with the Royal family.

The wits called the ministry that rose upon his ruins the King's Cabal, from their initials. They were Clifford, Arlington, Buckingham, Ashley, and Lauderdale. Clifford was of no great note; Lord Arlington was Secretary of State; Buckingham, Master of Horse; Anthony Ashley Cooper, ultimately Earl of Shaftesbury, was already Chancellor of the Exchequer; Lauderdale was the same, who, as John Maitland, had been a vehement Covenanter, but had become a boon companion of the King, and a supporter of all that was arbitrary. The new Lord Keeper was Sir Orlando Bridgeman, who was so aged that he could not hold office long, and was only put in as a stepping-stone for Shaftesbury.

The first proceeding of the Cabal as statesmen was wise. They were alarmed at the French conquest of Franche Comté, and knew that Holland had even more reason for alarm, and they therefore despatched Sir William Temple to the Hague with proposals of an alliance to check the ambition of France; and after some demurs this was agreed to, and a Triple Alliance was formed between England, Sweden, and Holland, to support Spain against the aggressions of France.

Louis XIV. thought it best to appear to give way, and a treaty was made, by which he retained the towns in Flanders that he had conquered, but restored Franche Comté to Spain. England had appeared to great advantage in this transaction, and it was a pity that there was neither honour nor stability in the men who guided her affairs to maintain the part she had taken.

The Court was madly gay. The Queen herself took part in strange diversions, going about masked in a sedan chair, and entering unknown into rooms where dancing was going on. Such frolics were customary at both the French and English Courts. Even Anne of Austria and Louis had indulged in them as a reaction from the excessive formality of their State life; but for Catharine of Braganza, nothing could have been more imprudent, since Buckingham was seeking for a pretext on which she could be divorced, and her childlessness, as well as her Roman Catholic faith, rendered her very

unpopular. It is even said that Buckingham proposed to have her stolen away, and hidden in one of the remote American plantations; but Charles heard of the notion with horror, saying it would be a wicked thing to make a poor lady miserable, only because she was his wife and had no children.

Buckingham's lawless dissipation was as scandalous as that of the King. Charles still submitted to the violence of Lady Castlemaine, whom he had made Duchess of Cleveland, with reversion to her son, Charles Fitzroy; but his admiration had drifted away from her to two comic actresses, Moll Davies and Nell Gwynn. They were much more harmless persons than their predecessor, and never meddled with affairs of State; indeed, Nell was very kind-hearted and charitable, and in later years became a good woman. Unhappily, these evil passions had so much effect both on public affairs and manners that there is no passing them over in silence. In France, Louise de la Vallière was often in agonies of repentance and fear, but still lingering, although the King was transferring his affections to the beautiful Athenaïs de Mortémar, Madame de Montespan, a much more brilliant and entertaining person than Louise, who had nothing but her beauty, grace, and profound affection for the King, and latterly had become too much depressed to be amusing. It was not till 1674, however, that she finally retired into the Convent of the Visitation, where her grief and her penances made a great sensation at the Court.

Deeply and earnestly good people there were at each Court, who were forced to tolerate evil. Madame de Sévigné too often laughed over it; but in England Margaret Blagge, one of the Queen's ladies, who lived in intimate friendship with John Evelyn, went through the Court life like a pure and limpid stream in the midst of foulness, observing her regular devotions, reading good books behind her playbill when forced to attend licentious theatricals, and keeping up her modest dignity whenever the gay courtiers or the King himself addressed her.

Evelyn himself, one of the best and most religious of men, could not help enjoying the conversation of the King in his better moods. Charles's abilities were of a high order, never better depicted than by the epigram that Lord Rochester (the Wilmot of his wanderings) affixed to his bed-chamber—

> 'Here lies our sovereign lord the King,
> Whose word no man relies on;
> Who never said a foolish thing,
> And never did a wise one.'

No one had more brilliancy in conversation or repartee, and people were delighted both with his wit and graciousness, and the familiarity he permitted. 'Old Rowley' was his familiar nick-name among his own circle, and to those who approached him he always said the right thing, and in the pleasantest manner, so that in spite of all the evils

of his life, he was never personally unpopular, and the people of London liked to see him, sauntering among his courtiers in St. James's Park, surrounded by his dogs, especially the little Spaniels still known by his name, feeding the ducks in St. James's Park, with a merry word for every one.

He had some knowledge of music and considerable taste, and that in the Chapel Royal at Whitehall was highly esteemed. The great composers, Blow and Purcell, were of his day, and gentlemen of all ranks viewed the science of music as one of the most suitable of accomplishments. Painting was chiefly represented by Sir Peter Lely, whose ladies, in easy attire, do not do much honour to him or to themselves. There was, however, a unique wood-carver, Grinling Gibbons, whom Evelyn discovered in a cottage at Deptford, carving a copy of Tintoretto's picture of the 'Stoning of St. Stephen.'

Evelyn showed it to the King, who was delighted with it, and sent it to be shown to the Queen, when, to Evelyn's great indignation, it was cried down by a 'peddling Frenchwoman who sold baubles to the ladies,' and found fault with things 'she understood no more than an ass or a monkey.' However, Charles gave Gibbons an appointment at the Board of Works, and much of his exquisite work is still extant, especially in the choir of St. Paul's. He also worked in marble, and executed a statue of the King for the new Royal Exchange.

There was likewise much scientific research, in which Charles took great interest, and Prince Rupert devoted himself to it. Robert Boyle, son to that Earl of Cork with whom Strafford quarrelled, was a great discoverer in physical science, and the 'Royal Society for Improving Natural Knowledge' was chartered by the King, perhaps after the example of the French Academy, and greatly fostering the advance of knowledge.

Literature flourished as it generally does after the stimulus of a great national convulsion. Milton, after his stormy political career, had, in his old age and blindness, returned to the poetical delights of his early youth, and living in his cottage at Bunhill Fields, dictated to his daughters his 'Samson Agonistes' and 'Paradise Lost' and 'Regained.' These attracted little or no attention at the time, though the grave beauty, and the perfect harmony of many passages, especially in 'Paradise Lost,' gradually won their way, and placed the author on the same pinnacle of fame with Shakspere, while, in spite of the Socinian tone of some portions, the poems became to many of the English what Dante's 'Inferno' was to the Italians.

Dryden was, however, the Court poet, and there was a crowd of playwrights, mostly licentious, but whose works Pepys deliberately preferred to those of Shakspere. Defoe was writing numerous books, of which 'Robinson Crusoe' is deservedly the survivor, as one of the universal classics of England. So also is the 'Pilgrim's Progress,' the wonderful work of John Bunyan, the tinker, or rather brazier, who was confined in Bedford Jail under the Conventicle Act.

Evelyn, though not a great writer, did much for the beauty of England by his 'Sylva,' a book on planting and on forest trees. During the past troubles, great havoc had been made in the fine old parks and forest lands where grew primeval trees, and in the lavish Court of Charles II. there were plenty of gentlemen who defined them as excrescences designed by Providence for the payment of debts. It was Evelyn who first roused the public mind to the beauty and value of the glorious forest-tree, and incited country gentlemen to be careful in the cutting, and to renew the ranks of the fallen by planting. His own estates of Wootton, and his garden at Says Court, were thus rendered beautiful, and the former still bears witness to his taste by its noble timber trees.

PREPARATION OF PRAYER-BOOK LESSONS.

XLI.

AT THE GRAVE.

A. King Edward's First Prayer-book gives after the Lesson, the Kyrie, the Lord's Prayer, and these suffrages, the two first with repetition like an antiphon.

℣. And lead us not into temptation.
℟. But deliver us from evil.
℣. Enter not, O Lord, into judgment with Thy servant.
℟. For in Thy sight no living creature shall be justified
℣. From the gates of hell.
℟. Deliver their souls, O Lord.
℣. I believe to see the goodness of the Lord
℟. In the land of the living.
℣. O Lord, graciously hear our prayer.
℟. And let our cry come unto Thee.

Then followed the Prayer which with us follows the Lord's Prayer, and thus the service ended. But in the revision of 1549, the beautiful portion to be said at the grave was substituted for these versicles.

S. Who thought of doing so?

A. That we do not know. And it is remarkable because the grand anthem sung at the grave comes from Germany, though it had been used in the Salisbury breviary, at the Compline for the third Sunday in Lent.

S. The first verse is Job xiv. 1, 2.

A. Yes; I did not mean that verse, but the other three, beginning 'Man that is born of a woman.'

S. Is their history known?

A. They were composed in the ninth century by Notker, a monk of St. Gall, who had been wisely bidden by his superior to devote himself to religious poetry, the same who wrote the grand hymn of judgment, *Dies Iræ, dies illa.* The story goes that he was watching some workmen building the bridge of St. Martin, and often in positions of extreme danger, when these words, almost of inspiration, occurred to him.

S. In Latin?

A. Yes. '*Mediâ vitâ in morte sumus*' are the original first words. It was constantly used as a dirge in Germany, and as a battle song, and even was viewed as a sort of charm, so that the Synod of Cologne in 1316 forbade its use without special permission from the Bishop.

Luther translated it into the hymn, '*Mitten wir in Leben sind*,' and in that form it holds its place in Germany.

S. It is most solemn, and I remember how it struck on me at the first funeral I ever was at, that of the little girl in my class who was drowned.

A. Yes; after sudden deaths it has a very striking application, and even at other times, though the last illness may have been lingering, standing as we do in the midst of graves, the words come home to us. I do not think any words in our whole Prayer-book are so awful as those verses—especially the final one.

S. It is like the Litany, 'In the hour of death . . . Good Lord, deliver us.'

A. It helps to store up prayers against that time when we shall be absolutely alone, with no power to aid us among those from whom we shall be drifting away. And who can tell what are the conflicts of the soul when the bodily power of expression is gone, and the spiritual world is opening on us. Then, indeed, none can tell how it may be with the passing spirit.

S. You make me tremble.

A. It is well so to tremble that we may pray before that hour of the 'great waterfloods.'

S. And now we come to that last farewell at the grave. I think I have read of the Greeks using an open bier, there giving the last kiss in the order of relationship. And then after the lowering into the grave comes the throwing of earth.

A. Three times, observe. It is, as it were, the beginning of the new Baptism to the Resurrection of the body. 'For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.' It was originally done by the priest, and in the Eastern Church he says, as he does so, 'The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof, the compass of the world and they that dwell therein.' The rubric of 1552 directed that 'some standing by' should cast the earth; but up to Bishop Cosin's time, many priests observed the old custom, and thus preserved the symbolism, raising the idea above the painful one of the rattle of the clods.

S. 'If human anguish o'er the shaded brow,
Pause, shuddering when the handful of cold earth
Touches the coffin lid.
If at our brother's name,
Once and again the thought "for ever gone"
Comes o'er us like a cloud, yet, gentle spright,
Thou turnest not away,
Thou knowest us calm at heart.'

A. For if it is 'earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust,' it is really the sowing the vile body that it may be made like unto His glorious Body.

S. 'In sure and certain hope of a joyful resurrection.' That is the sentence that gives umbrage.

A. But it need not do so. It is not expressing what regards merely the individual corpse, but all the members of Christ. There is held out to all the sure and certain hope of a joyful resurrection, there is no expression of judgment as to whether any one in particular will have such a rising. The Israelites had a sure and certain hope of Canaan, but all did not enter into the land of Canaan individually, though they did so collectively. So we commit the body to the earth in certain hope of a joyful resurrection of the worthy members of the Church, but we do not express a judgment on the person before us.

S. Here is the beautiful verse from Rev. xiv. 13.

A. Formerly used in the daily Mass for the dead, and, as Dr. Evans points out, describing their state in Paradise. It is, indeed, a most comfortable text.

S. The Kyrie and the Lord's Prayer follow.

A. The next prayer is from the office in the Sarum Missal. How often we feel the truth of the words, 'the burden of the flesh,' after watching great suffering. And I think it is worthy of note that it is here especially when we have our hearts turned from this world, and prepared to yearn towards that where all tears are dried away, that the Church ventures to put into our mouths the petition in the highest sense of 'Thy kingdom come.'

S. That He would accomplish the number of His elect and hasten His kingdom. Yes, we may be nearer to the spirit of St. John's 'Even so come, Lord Jesus' (Rev. xxii. 20).

A. The last Collect is the special Communion Service Collect; but omitting the sentence, 'Both we, and this our brother departed, receiving again our bodies, and rising again in Thy most gracious favour, may with all Thine elect receive eternal joy.'

S. Left out, I suppose, for fear it should be a prayer for the dead.

A. Yes; to gratify that strange and harsh recoil from what had been used for corrupt purposes. The overthrow of so much that may add to the peace and bliss of souls in their waiting state, has been most unfortunate, and there is almost as much ignorant superstition in the opposition to anything of the kind, as there is in the system of observances in the Roman Church.

S. However, private commendation is quite lawful.

A. That it was authorised, among others, by two such Bishops as Andrews and Heber, shows that it cannot be contrary to the mind of the Church.

S. The apostolic blessing ends.

A. It was added by Bishop Cosin. I suppose the words, 'Come ye blessed,' etc., of the Collect, were thought previously to be a sufficient blessing and dismissal.

SHORT ESSAYS.

BY ELIZABETH M. SEWELL.

ESSAY V.

IMAGINATION.

I HAVE been asked to write a paper upon Imagination, or rather upon the indulgence of it. The subject is difficult, and I feel disinclined to enter upon it. A definition is, as in most cases, the first thing required, and definitions are always more or less perplexing. They need so much guarding and correcting. Let any one try to give the true meaning of half-a-dozen nouns chosen at random, and he will soon be convinced of this.

Looking into Webster's Dictionary, which is the only one I happen to have near me, I find Imagination described in various ways by various authorities. The first definition seems the simplest. 'Imagination is the power or faculty of the mind by which it conceives and forms ideas of things communicated to it by the organs of sense.'

Imagination, therefore, according to this meaning, can neither be right nor wrong. It is only a power of the human mind.

Bacon says, 'Imagination, I understand to be the representation of an individual thought.'

A representation implies a picture. Imagination therefore is a mental picture. We all understand what this means, for we constantly make use of the expression, 'To picture to ourselves.'

Dugald Stewart says, 'The business of conception is to present us with an exact transcript of what we have felt or perceived. But we have also a power of modifying our conceptions, by combining the parts of different ones so as to form new wholes of our own creation. . . . I apprehend this to be the proper sense of the word (Imagination), if Imagination be the power which gives birth to the productions of the poet and the painter.'

This definition implies more than the creation of a mental picture. It involves a new arrangement and combination of such pictures.

Webster himself says, 'We would define Imagination to be the will working on the materials of memory. Not satisfied with following the order prescribed by nature, or suggested by accident, it selects the parts of different conceptions, or objects of memory, to form a whole, more pleasing, more terrible, or more awful, than has ever been presented in the ordinary course of nature. The two latter definitions give the true sense of the word, as now understood.'

It would seem from these definitions that the terms right and wrong, when applied to the indulgence of the Imagination, can only refer to the power of the will exercised in arranging, reconstructing, or turning away from the mental pictures derived from the organs of sense. If a person wills to picture to himself the scenery and surroundings of some great crime, he may be exercising with perfect innocence the faculty which enables the poet or the painter to bring before his fellow-creatures a vivid representation of some real or some fictitious event.

But if, in addition to this, he pictures himself to himself as the originator of, or sharer in the crime, he is manifestly wrong, because by this imagination he rouses in himself the excited feelings which, if the opportunity offered, would possibly lead him actually to commit the offence.

It is here that the danger of Imagination meets us; but many of us are very slow to recognise it. We look upon Imagination as a valuable gift, and no doubt it is. Without it this would be a very dull, prosaic world, and the things of time and sense would occupy our thoughts to the exclusion of all higher objects. But none the less is it a danger. That which is most precious in its right exercise is most destructive when it is wrongly used, and to the unlawful indulgence of the Imagination may be traced many of the greatest crimes and the most degrading vices of mankind.

Yet further—some persons, especially the young, will say, and say truly, that images present themselves to the mind uncalled; but they will also say that such images cannot be dismissed at will, and this is unquestionably false. We have only to recall some very common expressions to assure ourselves that when it suits our purpose we can dismiss, and constantly do dismiss, images which are unpleasant What, for instance, is the meaning of the words, 'I made up my mind not to think about it;' or, 'The subject was so disagreeable, I did not let my mind dwell upon it'? Thoughts, abstract ideas, are surely derived from images of sense. Beauty is the abstract idea of beautiful things. If we had never seen any beautiful thing, we could, it seems, have no idea of beauty; and though we may have no specially disagreeable object before our eyes when we turn away from an unpleasant thought, there can be little doubt that if we had not originally imagined or pictured to ourselves some of the circumstances and surroundings connected with the thought, it would have had no existence in our minds. I speak a little doubtfully upon this point, because it is connected with some deep metaphysical and controverted questions; yet in the ordinary way of looking at the government of the thoughts, I think we shall all allow that if we want to turn the mind away from a painful subject of thought we can do so, though we may not be equally willing to admit that we can, in like manner, get rid of some painful picture impressed on the Imagination. But let it be granted that mental pictures, images, imaginations, are

less under control than abstract thoughts, then is it not incumbent upon us all the more, if we wish to control the latter, to begin by keeping a watch upon the former? The duty seems clear. It may be well to inquire into it a little more carefully.

Vanity is said to be a woman's special fault; what fosters it?—When I was a little girl, in a very old-fashioned strict school, no looking-glass was allowed us in our bedrooms, with the exception of one which could not by any possibility be used, for it was placed upon the top of a very high wardrobe. I am not aware that any of us were so lovely as to make the sight of our own countenances an incentive to vanity; and I am not at all sure that the fear of being badly dressed, or untidy, did not tend quite as much to concentrate our thoughts upon ourselves, as a glance in a looking-glass, which might have shown us that our fears were unfounded, would have done; but anyhow, it was deemed better for our young minds that we should not see what we were like; so the supposed temptation was kept out of our way. But St. James, when writing to the early Christians, seems to have had no fear of such temptations. He says expressly that a man, (and I suppose the word is to be taken as describing a human being of either sex) "beholding his natural face in a glass . . . beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.' Looking in a mirror does not then in itself conduce to vanity; the impression left is too vague, and the power of imagination is only momentary. And yet when we speak of a silly girl who is constantly looking at herself in the glass, we certainly do mean that such looking is to be condemned. What makes the difference? Surely the exercise of will. A girl looks at herself accidentally, or with a view to neatness and order in her dress, and the will is exerted unconsciously. She looks at herself continuously or repeatedly, thinking of the admiration she will excite, and the will is exerted consciously. The one action is simple, the other is not. The one is right, or at least innocent; the other is wrong and dangerous.

This brings me to the conclusion which I wished to reach. The discipline of Imagination is as much a duty as the discipline of action, because it is in our power to check or to indulge it. We may turn away from the mirror if we choose to do so. The first look may be necessary, the effect of the image upon our mind will be natural; but whether we repeat our glance or turn aside is to be decided by will and judgment. The action may be right, it may be wrong, it may be a matter of indifference, but anyhow it needs an exertion of the will; and whatever is the outcome of the look, we have no right to say we are not answerable for it because the working of the Imagination is involuntary. I have no wish absurdly to exaggerate the importance of the illustration I have chosen. It is not, of course, a sin for a girl to look at her face in the glass, and if it is a pretty face it must give pleasure, and the fact of possessing it must

be a gratification, just as it is pleasant to possess any other pretty thing. I only say that if a girl wishes to be simple and untouched by the love of admiration which leads so many to ruin, she will be watchful not to impress the image upon her mind by repeated glances, but will recognise that the visible image arouses the mental Imagination, and that the Imagination affects the will, and the will leads to acts.

This is just the natural sequence. It may not follow in every case, but it is likely that it will; and if we want to keep ourselves from personal vanity, we must begin by guarding the Imagination.

But yet further; I would say that the Imagination is a danger even when we are unconscious of its action. The pictures of external objects come before us at every turn, whether we will or not, and they leave some impression upon us; they must do so. But is this impression equally strong, whether we will or not? Many may be inclined to answer *Yes*. But here again we deceive ourselves. The will is continually at work. What do we mean by giving our attention, noticing, remarking? When the mind works in this way, it is in obedience to the will. What is it which arouses the will? Some hidden influence of inclination or dislike, which we have fostered at other times, and which now urges forward the will, and compels it to notice or attend. The will is in fact dependent on former impressions. They may be good; they may be bad; but in any case the will of to-day is influenced by the will of yesterday. When that will has been corrupted and debased by evil imaginations awakened by sights and sounds and words that are past, we shall be quick in giving our attention to the similar sights, or sounds, or words, which are present. We shall find ourselves springing forward, as it were, to meet them. The link of association will be between us and them. If, on the contrary, we were careful to fill our minds yesterday with thoughts of devotion, purity, kindness, derived from sights, sounds, and words of goodness, the kindred images of to-day will catch our attention and be welcomed, and reawaken in us the thoughts and the will which lead us to good actions. Not indeed that the imaginations of purity and goodness are reproduced as easily as those which are the reverse; the impulses of a fallen nature, and the imperfect action of a weak will prevent this; but the law of nature holds good, though it may and does act more strongly in the one case than in the other.

It is therefore a matter of the highest moment to keep our first imaginings pure, and to remember that the action of the will alone can render them impure, and this leads to a point which will touch young persons very nearly. Logicians tell us that there are various degrees of human knowledge, ranging from clear, as opposed to obscure; to intuitive, as opposed to symbolical. It is of the latter that I wish to speak. 'Intuitive' (I am quoting from 'Elementary Lessons in Logic,' by the late Mr. Stanley Jevons) 'would denote that

which we gain by seeing, and any knowledge which we have directly through the senses or by immediate communication to the mind is called intuitive. Thus we may learn intuitively what a square or a hexagon is, but hardly what a chiliagon, or figure of 1000 sides is. We could not tell the difference by sight of a figure of 1000 sides and a figure of 1001 sides. Nor can we imagine any such figure completely before the mind. It is known to us only by name or symbolically. All large numbers, such as those which state the velocity of light, 186,000 miles per second, and the like, are known to us only by symbols, and they are beyond our powers of imagination. Infinity is known in a similar way, so that we can in an intellectual manner become acquainted with that of which our senses could never inform us.'

Now a similar difference between two kinds of knowledge is discoverable in moral subjects, and it is a matter of the gravest importance to recognise it.

We are so constituted that in our early years a very large portion of knowledge, especially knowledge of evil, is conveyed to us, as it were, symbolically. It is for the most part left to our own choice to decide whether it shall in any sense become what, I think, may fairly be called intuitive. We sometimes hear it said of a book, 'It amused the child, and did no harm, for it was not understood.' What do we mean? How can a child be amused by what it does not understand? If we were required to express ourselves more clearly, we might explain that the scenes represented were so far removed from the child's experience that no definite picture could be formed of them; and the Imagination would not therefore be called into play so as to excite a lasting impression.

I remember, when I was a child, being allowed to read the 'Arabian Nights' Entertainment' in their original, unexpurgated form. The coarseness which shocks me now, was not perceived then. I am glad, however, that the present generation are more carefully guarded, because facts and descriptions which we do not understand at the time will still rest in the memory, and meet with their explanation in after years.

How large a portion of the fearful sin which is in the world is known to us only symbolically, during our whole lives, few of us probably have ever considered. God mercifully guards us. Each one knows only a part. That which may be called the intuitive knowledge of the whole would overwhelm our human weakness. But the point I wish to stress is that this ignorance, or, rather, this imperfect knowledge, is, as a rule, the especial blessing of youth, and is more particularly bestowed upon girls.

Words, histories, allusions, must be met with, even learnt, and so far understood as to convey to the mind some special idea which may be clearly distinguished from all other ideas; just as we all know the distinction between nothing and a trillion, though we cannot define

nothing, and cannot count a trillion. But beyond this, the mind has no occasion to travel. Nothing and a trillion are amongst the current coin of our calculations, and they serve every purpose for which they can be needed; and in like manner words which symbolically represent gross sins, are sufficient for all purposes of warning, reproof, or instruction.

The temptation to the young mind is to go beyond this; not, indeed, to act the sin, but to understand it in detail; and at first sight there seems to be no harm in the wish. Persons will even say that such understanding is necessary in order to avoidance, but this is very far from the case. Understanding in such a sense leads to action. It is the first step on the road; and if the act should be either wrong in itself, or wrong at that special time, or under the special circumstances, and we are thus led into sin, our fall may be traced distinctly to the wilful gratification of our desire to make our symbolical knowledge intuitive.

I use the word 'wilful' advisedly, because it is a most remarkable fact in the constitution of the human mind. that the same knowledge which leads to sin and misery when acquired voluntarily for the satisfaction of curiosity, will, as a rule, lead to no painful results when acquired involuntarily or from duty.

I suppose few persons have gone far into life without having gained from circumstances and surroundings a knowledge of evil, which, it might seem, would necessarily be corrupting to purity and refinement of mind; more especially is this the case with those who are engaged in the work of rescuing the outcast population of our large towns; but there is a wonderful safeguard in duty. The knowledge of evil passes through minds so occupied, but it passes out again. It leaves no stain; whereas the very slightest acquaintance with such scenes and sins when gained wilfully, either from weakness or curiosity, will leave a mark absolutely indelible. This is a fact which ought never to be forgotten; and it is the first and most important reason for keeping the Imagination pure by contenting ourselves with symbolical knowledge.

And here lies the insidious mischief of so many modern novels. The surroundings of sin, and the incitements to its commission, are described graphically, in glowing colours, so as to leave vivid images upon the imagination. These images are retained, and can be recombined by an effort of will, so as to suit the position of the individual who is excited by them. The circumstances are then no longer regarded as belonging to another; they become part of the reader's own life; and thus they awaken personal interests, wishes, emotions, which lead directly to actual evil. The excuse for such novels often is, that no real wickedness is committed by the persons thus brought forward in them. A wife, for instance, falls in love with some one, and is *tempted* to leave her husband; but she does not leave him, and therefore the story is considered safe. And told in this bare way, it

certainly arouses no feeling or interest; but when all the details of the temptation are given in passionate, glowing language, the Imagination is worked upon, and the mind is too often lastingly stained.

French novels, and, alas! English novels also, have too often this fatal mischief in them; whilst Shakespeare can be read safely. There is coarseness in his plays; but it is the coarseness of words only, and if we will, the words may remain words. They are symbolical, they serve a purpose, but it is at our own option to seek further into their meaning. If we do, if we indulge our curiosity, the consequences rest on ourselves, not on the writer, nor on the literary necessity which made it incumbent on us to read Shakespeare.

The indulgence of curiosity! There lies the temptation, and no one who has in any way realised, either from observation or personal experience, the danger of the indulgence of curiosity, will doubt the need of giving the most earnest warning upon this point to young people.

There is a specious argument ready to neutralise the warning, but it is a very false and fatal one. I was conversing not long ago with an Indian Pundit. He had, I believe, been a Brahmin, but when I saw him he certainly was in no sense an idolater, yet neither was he a Christian. He was simply a cultivated gentleman, who looked upon every religion philosophically, and was ready to accept the foundation of truth in all alike.

We were speaking of the beginning of the Book of Genesis, and of the account given in it of the fall of man. The Pundit did not appear inclined to turn away from the history in any way scoffingly, but he said there was one difficulty which stood in the way of his accepting the story: knowledge was represented as evil. It was by eating the fruit of the tree of Knowledge that Eve fell. But this was contrary to fundamental truth; no knowledge could be evil. Therefore the Bible history must be in error.

I could not at the time attempt to argue with him; but I knew full well that he was wrong, and that there is a knowledge of evil which must bring with it sorrow and repentance, and which may bring with it sin. Eve was fully able to distinguish between the tree of Knowledge and the tree of Life. She required no more teaching, no more intimate acquaintance with the properties of the fruit to prevent her from confounding it with other fruit. All that she required was to have its appearance and position so brought before her as to enable her to avoid plucking it; and this knowledge she obtained through the medium of sight. But curiosity led her to desire the additional knowledge of taste. Sophistry blinded her, and she fell; and in like manner hundreds, thousands—may we not safely say millions?—of human beings have fallen, if not irretrievably, yet to their own bitter misery, by not contenting themselves with the bare symbolical words which were all they required for their guidance in life, but seeking further to convert the words into vivid pictures which might interest and excite the Imagination.

So especially it is in the present day. Young people must, they declare, read sensation novels. Why? Because the scenes so powerfully described work on the imagination. They cannot read Walter Scott. Why? Because when he has to speak of sin, he does so in unadorned words which do not excite passionate feelings, the especial means of temptation of the Evil One.

This is the spirit of the age. It is very difficult to guard against it. It creeps more or less into every form of fiction, and even of history; for we are all impatient of what we call dry facts. We want vivid pictures; and as descriptions of such are more arousing to the Imagination than descriptions of goodness, therefore we enjoy them more. There is but one safeguard: to check the evil in its germ; never to allow ourselves to inquire into details which shall give us precise images instead of general outlines; to be contented with symbolical knowledge. Then the Imagination will be unstained, and the evil which may accidentally meet us on our way through life, will pass and leave no spot. If we are not thus careful, we shall find that chance words, idle tales, and even sights and sounds, in themselves perfectly innocent, will by the power of association produce images distressing, if not actually polluting, which will haunt our path, and present themselves before us, even at the most sacred seasons, and in the most sacred places. Through God's help, they may be indeed repelled, and by His mercy forgiven; but they will nevertheless fill us with a shame that must add tenfold keenness to our self-condemnation, for we shall know that the evil is of our own creating.

Once for all, let us remember that God gives us the choice of acquiring so-called knowledge, but He does not give us the choice of forgetting it.

'To the pure all things are pure, but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving, is nothing pure.'—*Titus* i. 15.

A CONVERSATION ON FOREIGN BOOKS.

Arachne. You often ask me to recommend you a German book—have you ever seen this one—*Bilder aus meiner Knabenzeit*, by L. Kalisch? It is not a tale, nor exactly an autobiography, but gives very curious recollections of his Jewish ancestors. There were four generations living at one time under the same roof, the most remarkable of whom was the great-grandfather, whom contemporaries called Chereb chadda (the sharp-edged sword), or Yad Hachasaka (the strong hand), after the name of a book which he had written. The deep reverence felt for him by his descendants is amusingly and rather touchingly shown by an anecdote which is related in the book. One day his son (grandfather of Ludwig Kalisch), already long a grey-haired and elderly man, reproved the little Ludwig, whereupon Chereb chadda said sharply, 'Blockhead, do not worry the child!' and the rebuked son bowed his head meekly, and went away without a word. He not only reproved his little grandson, however, but often amused him by relating amazing legends, one of which described King Solomon as crushing two mountains together. This aroused some scepticism in the little listener, who observed that there was nothing about it in the Bible. 'The Rabbis say so,' answered the grandfather conclusively; 'and if it were not true, they would not say so.'

Spider. I must read it. Just lately we have had several interesting French books. Henry Greville's *Héritage de Xénie* is very sad and touching, and I rather like her *Vœu de Nadia.*

A. She is at her best on Russian ground. You should read *Terre de France*, by Julliot, a new writer, who has made a really pretty story out of slight materials; but how strange it is that in their bitterness against the Germans, the French seem entirely to forget that the first Napoleon allowed indescribable cruelties to be perpetrated by his troops in Germany, and that the Parisians shouted *à Berlin* to all the echoes at the first word of the Franco-German war!

S. The title of *Le crime de Sylvestre Bonnard*, by Anatole France, looked so startling that I was almost afraid to read it; but it turned out a very graceful story, and quite refreshing after that gloomy book, *Un isolé*, by Etienne Marcel, who generally writes so pleasantly.

A. What is it about?

S. The story of two generations of executioners—those Sansons, whose official title was Monsieur de Paris! or, rather, that was the title given to the head, in each generation. Apparently the eldest

son had no choice but to follow in the footsteps of his father, and it is on this that the story turns.

S. I do not think I should like it. People say that Pierre Loti is a clever writer?

A. There is no doubt of that, but he is too realistic for English taste. I should not put that powerful book, *Mon frère Ives*, into your hands, I think. By the bye, when we were speaking of that very uncertain writer who calls herself Henry Gréville, I ought to have recommended her amusing continuation of *Dosia—la fille de Dosia*—who turns out rather like her charming mother in her naughty youth, and who scandalises Dosia as much as if she herself had been the most prudish of damsels.

S. Tell me of some memoirs.

A. If you can get the *Souvenirs* of the Vicomte Walsh, do. He came of an Irish family, who followed James II. to France, and remained there until the Revolution, when they took refuge in England. This is one of the few memoirs which describes the life of the *émigrés*. The most aristocratic lived in Baker Street—*Baker Street!* gathering round the Comte d'Artois, and they met of an evening and plaited straw hats, which were carried round to the shops in a 'coach' by some young member of the party; sometimes he was successful in selling them, sometimes not—there were heavy hearts when the hats came back. The priests and poorer refugees lived wherever they could get a cheap lodging, in dire poverty, but cheerfully and with dignity, though some would have starved outright but for the money given them by the English Government. The Vicomte once met a girl of noble family reduced to carrying milk cans slung on her shoulders in order to earn a little money for a sick mother.

S. I wish that many of the *émigrés* had not at last gone home and abused England who sheltered them.

A. It must have been bread salter than ever Dante ate which they lived on, ruined, exiled, in a strange land, and among a people then much more insular and unlike themselves than now. Even Madame de Staël, who saw us under comparatively favourable circumstances, liked our principles, but not ourselves.

S. I dare say that the English ladies whom she met could not even talk French as well as Chaucer's Prioress, and were far too shy and too much afraid of her to do themselves justice.

A. Apropos of Madame de Staël, read her *Dix années d'exil*, a book whose wit and worth should always keep it in memory.

S. One hears a good deal now of Russian novels.

A. Yes, they have come into fashion in France; but I can hardly judge of them, as I only know them in translations. Tolstoi strikes me as gloomy and powerful, with a dash of coarseness beyond what he really needed to make his stories faithful pictures. Turgenieff makes it his mission to show the good qualities of the Russian

peasant, though overlaid by superstition and all the vices born of serfdom; and on the other hand, he has no words hard enough for the sins and follies of the upper classes, and the corruption of government. His stories are well constructed, and the characters are strongly drawn, but often too unlike any known to ourselves to strike us as natural, though I have no doubt they are. He is a terribly grim and hopeless writer.

S. I wonder he was allowed to publish.

A. His first book seems to have escaped the censor, who passed it as a mere picture of Russian life near Oral; but it made such a sensation that the Government was alarmed, and banished Turgenieff to his estates. The late Czar, however, then Czarewitch, was much moved and struck by the revelations the book contained, and with considerable difficulty obtained his pardon and leave for him to come to Petersburg. He soon left Russia after this, and died in Paris in 1883. I should think his books would act rather as a solvent than a reconstructive force, for there is no hope in them, and no belief in a better future for Russia.

SIEGLINDE.

BY R. METCALFE.

'Strive, suffer, attain.'

CHAPTER I.

The sun was setting behind the Castle ramparts, flooding portcullis, buttress, and keep with glory, and striking sparks of fire from the glass within the mullioned windows.

Far below the plain stretched away, level as an open palm, and crossed by silver lines marking the course of the river which had come down from the distant mountains as a tumbling torrent, but now meandered through calm pastures as still waters, except at such times as they were swollen to overflowing by heavy rains. The plain was bounded on one side by a forest which stretched away as far as the eye could see, giving grateful shade in summer, supplying fuel in winter to the Castle and its dependencies, and giving employment to the charcoal-burners who had their huts in the clearings of its lonely depths.

The trees were taking on their autumn stains of red and gold, and glowed in the sunset light as though splashed with wine, and hung with coronals.

Far away, over the eastern sky, the reflections from the burning west melted into etherealised vapours, and in the faintest, furthest distance, apparently lifted above the horizon's edge, might be discerned, now and again, what looked still like floating cloud-forms, but were in reality the thin outlines of the blue hills of Wonne Land.

But it was said that only by the pure-hearted could this lovely distant vision be seen, and then only at times—either at early dawn when the morning's eyelids first lifted in the east above those hills, or at the lighting of the west at the sunset hour, when the reflection of its glory was thrown for a few moments upon their summits.

There were two people watching for this vision on the high battlements of the Castle's eastern tower. One of these was a lady, whose head was covered by the long veil denoting one of high rank, which floated round her fair young face and fell over the silken robe; it was held in its place by a slender gold circlet clasping her head, and from which a pure crystal star of peculiar shape fell, and glistered upon her forehead; her head was bent forward eagerly, and her eyes looked onward to the distant horizon's edge with a certain calm assurance of joy; her hands were clasped together, like one who prayed while she watched. The other person seemed to be the warder of the Castle, for he carried a large horn tipped with silver in the

belt of his leathern jerkin; his face was rugged and honest, and now brought into relief as it was by the glow of the sky, while he leaned upon his staff, with keen eyes fixed upon the eastern line, and deeply set under their grey, shaggy brows, it seemed the very image of vigilance or of patient expectancy.

A sudden radiant smile overspread the lady's face like a reflection of the light, and she turned to the old retainer who stood at a little distance behind her, exclaiming, 'There, there, Werner, do you see it—my lord's beautiful land?'

Werner nodded his head with a smile of content.

'Yes, madam,' he answered; 'the sight is a cheering one for old eyes like mine, and many days when I stand here and watch it in the dawn, I almost think I can trace out the towers and spires of its cities. Yesterday I saw it thus, so clear was the morning's light upon its mountains; and then when the sun drew up the white morning mists and they rolled over the plain towards me, I could almost believe I saw my lord riding out with his retinue and coming to visit us.'

The lady had not seemed to hear much of the warder's speech, so rapt was her gaze upon the ethereal vision in the far east, which already had begun to fade into grey as the sun dropped behind the dark western forest; but perhaps this quick fading, or Werner's last words, brought a shadow over her lately radiant look, as she said—

'Oh, Werner, it seems very long since your liege left us for Wonne Land; I cannot help sometimes wondering when he will return here.'

'I do not wonder,' answered Werner, 'in all the years that I have served my liege I have learned such trust in him, I think nothing could go wrong that he is pleased to do, for I have often found by experience that what I presumed to think wrong, which my lord may have been pleased to do, turned out to be right for us all, and if I had had my way I should have made a sorry mess of it.'

The lady of the Castle turned towards the old servant and smiled. 'Ah, faithful Werner, you reprove my little faith; you have known my lord longer than I, and have served him well, even in those days which seem so long ago to me now, before my lord wedded me, when I was an unhappy child in the castle of my father. By the way, Werner, do you know if it is true that my father has been seen of late upon the estate of Kuno, that wicked enemy of my lord? One of my women has told me so.'

As she spoke she threw a look of some fear towards the left where the dark forest-line girdled the distance. Some miles beyond those forest depths there lay a wide country of wild and barren moorland; travellers who had lost their way had told shudderingly of their perils from treacherous heath-bogs and morasses, in which some had lost their lives, and how the further they had journeyed on the wilder and more strangely dismal grew the land, seamed with bleak rocks, and covered by coarse, blunted grass, wherein no flower or delicate thing

seemed able to grow, and how still farther lay the unwholesome marsh lands always wrapt in grey, clammy mists where none dared to penetrate, but where it was believed that Kuno, the powerful lord of that country, had his castle. With that Prince, Sieglinde's lord was at deadly feud, and his serfs and retainers had often some hard fighting in repelling this enemy's bold attacks upon the estate, and the treacherous robberies by his servants of the cattle or timber of Lord Agathos.

It was here that the Lady Sieglinde's father, Oscar, had been seen by some of her servants, while on an expedition beyond the boundaries of the estate for the purpose of driving home some strayed cattle. Oscar was lord of a country at some miles distance, a stern and rugged land, where, in one of the mountain fastnesses, he had his castle of the 'Wolf's Stronghold.' There Sieglinde had spent her strange, wild childhood and maidenhood, the chief pleasures of which had been to follow her father and his boon companions to the hunt of the wild boar and deer, or to the shooting of the quails that flew in great flocks across the moorland.

These—and the decking of her father's halls with boughs and the tusks or feathers of the quarry, as the case might be, for his frequent feastings, when she sang snatches of the wild hunting songs which Wenzel, the old minstrel, had taught her, accompanying her voice with the sounds of his rude creuth—were the maiden's pastimes, while for harder tasks she had to sweep and strew the stone floors with rushes or straw, and assist the old crone, Kunigunde, when she cooked the great joints on the kitchen hearth for the revels. No gentler pursuits were hers, nor thoughts of a higher life, though it was true that from time to time strange yearnings, which she was unable to understand, came and looked in upon her soul like fitful lights gleaming for a moment over dark waters, bringing only a vague pain. Was it not a solution of their mystery when suddenly a wondrous revelation, an unhoped-for answer to her gropings, came into Sieglinde's life?

Lord Agathos had come to woo her, and the face of the old life was changed; old things had passed away, and she might not rest in them any more, for the call to the new life had come, and she must rise and follow. Great rejoicings had there been at his Castle when Lord Agathos wedded Sieglinde; and standing before the altar of the chapel in her white, shining bridal dress, he had hung upon her forehead the crystal star which was to be the token of her fidelity, and which had the strange property, common also to some jewels, of increasing its lustre or becoming dim, according to the faith and love of the wearer.

There had been much for Sieglinde to learn and unlearn in that new life of hers, much to learn of her new ties, duties, and responsibilities, and together with these there grew also an humble, ever-increasing knowledge, seeming to gather force each day, of the great goodness, wisdom, and love of Lord Agathos.

But now those first happy days were past, and an urgent embassy had come from the chief city of that fair tract of country in the far east which also belonged to her lord, imploring him to come and settle some affairs of great importance which had arisen, and needed his presence.

Weeks had run on into months, and months were swelling into a year, and still Lord Agathos' return was delayed; new difficulties and complications arose one after the other which made that return still uncertain. From time to time messengers arrived from him bearing tidings and greetings to Sieglinde, and straitly charged to report to him of her safety and welfare. It was Sieglinde's deepest delight to entertain these messengers on their visits, and to glean from them every particular which they were able to give her of her lord's welfare, his words and pursuits; but to her question whether Lord Agathos had expressed any intention of returning to the Castle they always gave the same answer, that their lord had not yet made known his intentions to them in that respect.

It was now some time since any messenger had arrived, and Sieglinde looked eagerly every day to see the well-known silver crest of one of her lord's trusty knights giving a gleaming token of his approach across the plain. She had been watching thus this evening, yet no messenger had come; but instead had shone forth the vision of the fair Wonne Land, gladdening her eyes with its message of peace. She was turning now to descend from the watch tower, for the evening shadows were beginning to creep over the plain, when Werner said—

'There is a sound of singing methinks, madam, and the distant tramp of feet. The sound comes from over yonder—the forest way; perhaps it is a company of pilgrims.'

Sieglinde paused and listened, and as they waited the sound drew nearer, and now a little band of from twenty to thirty wayfarers was seen defiling with slow steps along the road from the forest, and as they came in view of the walls and towers of the Castle, they raised their voices in unison, and their tones, plaintive and heart-stirring as is the sound of voices in the open air, floated up to the watchers on the tower—

'Pilgrims, we go to the fair land of Promise,
Shadows of evening fall over the way;
Our hearts wax faint, and our footsteps grow weary,
Staff of the pilgrim! be Thou our stay.

Far wends the road to the fair land of Promise,
By mountain and torrent, by forest or mere;
What recks the storm-toss'd when the haven he seeth?
How smiles the toiler when rest draweth near!'

'It is the Pilgrim's Song of Hope,' said Sieglinde. 'They will need shelter for the night and refreshment; I must go and see that all is prepared. Good-night, good Werner.'

CHAPTER II.

THE great hall of the Castle was soon full of noise and hurrying to and fro as Sieglinde's servants brought water to wash the pilgrims' feet, strewing the floor with fresh rushes, and laying out the tables with hospitable fare. The hall was a long room, its groined roof supported by stone pillars; its windows, hung round by the large trailing leaves of a vine, opened upon a cloister, through which a view of the distant plain below, now wrapt in the purple shadows of night, could be seen. Small lamps, suspended by iron chains from the roof above the tables, cast a soft light upon the faces of the pilgrims—some young and full of earnest hope, others aged and worn by the toil of the journey, as though now they drew near their end, and were only hopeful of rest; some merry and inspirited by the good cheer set before them; some travel-stained and sad.

The servants passed to and fro serving the guests; and when the feast was drawing to a close, the Lady Sieglinde came in to see them, together with Guido the priest, chaplain to Agathos and Sieglinde. He was a tall, spare man with keen yet kind eyes, and a face on which was stamped the signature of a high spirituality—a face breathed through by the calm and dominant soul, of which it seemed but the transparent outward sign—the thin hair, worn rather long, fell round a brow full of thought and dreams.

Sieglinde passed down the room, greeting her guests with smiles of welcome, followed by the chaplain, who spoke a kind word to one and another, inquiring of their welfare and circumstances, the distance they had travelled, and the trials of the way. At the end of the table, just beneath one of the lamps which threw its light upon his face, there sat a pilgrim, whose dark eyes continually followed the Lady Sieglinde with restless persistency. He was a man past the prime of life, but remarkable for his powerful, vigorous frame, and features which spoke of much outdoor life, wind, and weather, a keen eye for the haunts of deer and ptarmigan, and a broad shoulder for the gun. Such a face and figure looked something strange in the pilgrim's garb—the sober gown and hat with its cockle-shell, the wallet and wooden cross hanging at the girdle.

When at last Sieglinde reached the end of the table, he fixed his eyes upon her face as though he would compel her glance to himself. This he succeeded in doing, and as Sieglinde's eye fell upon him, a sudden paleness overspread her face, and she made an exclamation of surprise.

'Hermann, is it you?'

The pilgrim sprang to his feet.

'Yes, my lady,' he said; 'for my lady you will always be, though it seems you have forgotten the old days at the "Wolf's Stronghold," when I was proud to be your teacher in handling the reins, and

sitting fiery Reimer at the five-feet bar, or casting the fly for the silver salmon when they rush leaping over the weir; but greatness is but a sorry remembrancer, methinks, and new friends soon put the old out of countenance.'

A shadow of pain seemed to cross Sieglinde's face at these words, but after an instant she answered—

'No, good Hermann, take back your reproach; old friends are not forgotten indeed, but you know well that the present duty ever looms the nearest; but how fares my father, and all at my old home, and how come you to be going on pilgrimage?'

But the pilgrim had sunk back into his seat, and the eagerness of a moment before died out of his face suddenly.

'Oscar is well, and all at the Wolf's Stronghold,' he answered shortly, as he took up his rude knife with its handle of buck horn, and bent again over his platter of meat and bread.

Guido had been standing by, and had observed this little scene in silence.

'I will speak again with you before you go, Hermann,' Sieglinde said, as she moved away down the hall.

When the meal was over, the priest Guido gathered the pilgrims for evening prayer in the chapel of the Castle, where their voices soon were heard in the sacred chants and hymns.

An oppression, unaccountable to herself, had taken possession of Sieglinde's soul; the unexpected sight of the face of her father's old huntsman, closely associated as it was with all the recollections of her childhood and past life, had brought a train of sad thoughts with which the discouragement of the earlier part of the evening unconsciously mingled. Weariness oppressed her, and a longing for solitude and silence, so that, instead of going into the chapel with the rest, she stole out into the cloister which commanded a view of the plain eastwards, where the round moon was now rising slowly through the vapours; and wrapping herself in her mantle, she leaned against the low parapet which ran along one side of the cloister. Her father! Could it be right that she should cut herself off so entirely from him, to whom—little cause as she had to love him—she was still bound by the strong ties of nature? Was it just that she should give reason to all those at the Wolf's Stronghold, who had shown her kindness, to say that she had forgotten them? But how could she assure them of her faithfulness when Agathos had so strictly forbidden her ever to re-visit her father's castle? It was true he had sent several messages thither to the effect that Sieglinde's father would be very welcome if he came to visit his daughter; but she must never return to the Wolf's Stronghold. But was it likely that Oscar would come to her? though she did indeed desire and pray for it every day that she might show him something of her new-found happiness, and strive to soften his wild nature, even be permitted perhaps to teach him the way of a higher life. How was

she ever to do this so long as Agathos' command was in force? How easily could she have re-visited her old home for a few days, and seen her father again! And why had Agathos laid this restriction upon her? Was it that he had fancied her father would refuse to give her up again, if once he regained his power over her? Sieglinde shuddered as she reached this point in her thoughts, and checked herself with a low cry.

'Oh, Agathos, why do you leave me so long alone? It is so hard to be alone. I am weary of waiting! How is it that you do not come to me?'

There was no answer but the gentle rustling of the vine-leaves as the wind's soft fingers touched them, and the cry of a wakeful bird in its nest; then a footstep fell upon the silence, and looking up she saw a dark figure pass out from the shadow into the moonlight close beside her, and a harsh voice subdued to a whisper, which she immediately recognised as Hermann's, said in her ear—

'Ah, my little Lady Sieglinde, it is but sorry work calling for absent lords! They will return soon enough when it seems good to them, never fear; and meantime it would be wiser, methinks, to take the best that comes, and wear the roses instead of the willow.'

Sieglinde's face flushed, and she drew herself up haughtily.

'Hermann, I think you forget both yourself and whom you speak to in saying such words. Why have you followed me? and why are you not in the chapel with the other pilgrims?'

The old huntsman's face was overspread by a grim smile as he answered—

'Why, pilgrim or no pilgrim, I want my young lady home among us once more. Nay, hearken to me, Lady Sieglinde,' he said, as she moved away from him, 'you promised me a word with you before we go away, and when so likely as now? I am but a rough fellow, and have no smooth speeches ready-made to drop off my tongue like your folk here; but you know me of old—trusty and true as the steel of my good sword here, which I take the liberty of keeping by my side, even under my pilgrim's frock, and afraid neither of man nor aught worse, though I have had many a hairsbreadth tussle for dear life in my day. Ah, Lady Sieglinde, do you remember the day when Bertram ran away with you on his back over the Devil's Crag, and I after you as hard as horseflesh could carry, and you as cool and steady as I could have been myself, with nought but a little pallor in your cheek to show for it? That was a fine game you played the grim scythe-man, and I was prouder of you that day than if I'd seen all the lords of the country at your feet; and I should like to see you show as brave a front again, my lady, if your spirit is anything like what it used to be.'

'Ah, well, there are worse things than to face danger, good Hermann,' answered Sieglinde, with a faint smile; 'and to conquer oneself is harder than death,' she added in a lower tone.

'Oneself!' echoed Hermann, with a laugh. 'Now I know nothing of that sort of fight; foes enough in plenty all around one, I should say, without turning one's sword inward on one's only friend; and it was a merry, happy life at the Wolf's Stronghold, say what you will, Lady Sieglinde; by day the merry hunt, and the sport, with a good spice of danger to flavour it oftentimes, and at night the roaring chimney, and the brimming wine-cup, and the good song, when your voice, and the creuth in your fair fingers made a couple of nightingales for us, and your father——'

'My father! tell me of him,' interrupted Sieglinde; 'how is he? and does he miss me at all, do you think? and will he not come to visit me here one day?'

'Oh, as to that,' answered Hermann, with a gruff laugh, 'methinks that Oscar might find himself a little out of place here; but you see, he sent *me* instead, and a message, too, he sent—he would like to see his daughter again at the old home, if she still remembers the old days; the Wolf's Stronghold has not been the same place since you left it, and often, when he comes in from the hunt, he sits silent and moody by the hearth, and calls on me or Fritz for a good song to drown his memory.'

Sieglinde leaned her arms on the parapet, and buried her face in her hands.

'Would he be glad if I paid him a visit, Hermann?' she asked in a low voice.

At that moment, before Hermann could answer her, the pilgrims' voices singing in the chapel swelled louder, and the words, which seemed to be those of some anthem in the Holy Service, were borne out to where Sieglinde and Hermann stood: 'No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God.'

Sieglinde waited, seeming not to breathe, until the last note had died out into the night, and then, as though an arrow from some unseen hand had struck her, she covered her face with her veil, and hurriedly waving her hand to Hermann, without another word, she fled along the cloister, and disappeared before the old huntsman had recovered from his surprise.

CHAPTER III.

On the following morning the Castle was early astir. The pilgrims assembled once more in the chapel to hear some parting words of exhortation and blessing from the chaplain; among them a figure, wrapped in a long veil closely drawn, stood motionless beside one of the pillars—it was the Lady Sieglinde. Hermann, from his place had recognised and observed her with a dark perturbed look upon his face.

After the morning meal, as the pilgrims were gathering together

in the Castle yard, she came forward and stood upon the threshold of the great door to bid them God-speed. Her veil was thrown back from her face now, and the star upon her forehead glistened in the level beams of the rising sun. Hermann slung his wallet across his shoulder, and, carefully watching his opportunity, approached to the foot of the steps, and looking up at her, said in a subdued voice: 'Farewell then, my little lady, you will escape us this time, but I would give my best eye—and it's a sharp one, too, for most things—that your father will never rest till he has you back at the Wolf's Stronghold; and you remember enough of your father, perchance, to know that it would be easier to level the Devil's Crag than thwart what he has once set his mind upon; and there are powerful ones, too, who will be on his side.'

Sieglinde met the sinister leer with which the huntsman spoke these last words with a calm sad gaze.

'Hermann, you are on pilgrimage to my lord's country, they will teach you everything there; but when you return, tell my father that it will be useless for him to expect me at the Wolf's Stronghold; but say also, with my love and duty, that I trust to see him here one day'—and then, as Hermann turned away from her without a word or salutation, moved by an impulse of memory and pity, she bent towards him, and added in a low voice: 'Do not think I can ever forget my old home, or any one there; and oh, Hermann, beg my father by all that you hold dear, by the remembrance of me—your lady—to beware of my lord's enemy; they tell me that my father was seen on his land the other day——'

Some servants were approaching, and the pilgrims had fallen into their marching order.

Sieglinde broke off hurriedly. 'But your wallet is empty, Hermann; how is it that you have not filled it for the rest of the journey?'

A red light shot into the huntsman's eyes, and suddenly, tearing the wallet from his shoulder and the cross from his girdle, he waved both above his head for an instant like a madman; then flinging them with all his force to the ground with a wild shout, 'Hurrah, for the Wolf's Stronghold!' he broke through the throng of pilgrims, dispersing them right and left, and disappeared through the gateway. The pilgrims, recovering from their surprise, fell once more into line; Hermann's vacant place was filled up, and raising their banner aloft, they filed slowly out of the Castle yard. Sieglinde watched them with a pang of grief. Hermann's wild outbreak, and strange parting words disturbed her spirit; she felt as though she might still have made some effort to keep him in the pilgrim ranks. She watched the little band as it wended its way slowly across the portcullis and down the road in one dark purple patch. The pearly autumn morning lay all about, the dew was yet sparkling on the grass, the misty grey of the distance was shot by lines of pale yellow

light from the broken clouds; from the dwindling procession the pilgrims' voices wandered back through the stillness of the autumn air—

'Dawn has arisen, the night has departed,
What ills do we fear? with what foe shall we cope?
The waters shall cleave for our feet to pass on
To the Morn, to the Light, to the Land of our Hope!'

'O land of hope!' murmured Sieglinde, 'why must all go thither and I alone be left?'

The pilgrims' song dropped suddenly away as a turn of the road hid them from sight, and almost at the same moment Sieglinde caught the quick gleam of silver in the farther distance where the road emerged again into view; she clasped her hands together in joyful agitation. 'Tarry thou the Lord's leisure; be strong, and He shall comfort thine heart,' said a voice behind her, which she knew to be the priest Guido's, and with the meeting rush of her self-reproachful and happy thoughts, she could not answer, but only turned to meet his smile of sympathy. For the flashing figure now became visible as that of a knight in the familiar silver-coated armour of Lord Agathos, and with white pennon streaming from his holster, riding up the road towards the portcullis, and at the same moment the warder on the tower wound his horn, which was answered by the approaching knight with a cheerful blast.

'I think it is the joyous Sir Willibald, one of my lord's favourite knights,' said Sieglinde; and when the knight turned into the Castle yard, and catching sight of his lady, sprang to his feet and saluted her on bended knee, his fair young face open and beaming as the dawn seemed to give the warrant to his name.

'A thousand welcomes, Sir Willibald!' said Sieglinde; 'rise now, and tell me what news you bring of my lord, for my soul has thirsted to hear from him these many weary days.'

'He is well, dear lady, and sends you loving greetings, and a message which I will deliver by your good pleasure anon.'

When the Lady Sieglinde had joyfully brought Sir Willibald into the house, and made him rest, and refreshed him with wine, and he had laid aside his sword and his helmet of burnished silver from his yellow hair, and they walked to and fro in the sunbeams that now stole within the cloister, then Sir Willibald told Sieglinde her lord's message.

'He bade me say, dear lady,' said Sir Willibald, 'in a figure of speech meant as I think for your ear alone, that he would have you watch, for that when the crystal shows the colour of pain there would be great cause, but that you were not to fear, but patiently to continue your succour of the pilgrims; and he straitly charges you to refuse none, for that ere three moons are past he will send you a special messenger in token of his changeless love.'

'I thank my lord,' said Sieglinde: 'and now tell me of his state.'

A long while they walked in the cloister, Sir Willibald pouring into Sieglinde's eager ears all the news that he could give her of Lord Agathos and their manner of life in Wonne Land; and so that happy day wore on. Sieglinde's heart was singing for joy; it seemed as though she could never hear enough. She led Sir Willibald into the garden, which was laid out under the south wall of the Castle, where the sun had opened all the cups of the flowers into rays of beauty, and the birds were singing loudly from the forest.

There was a little arbour under the shade of a fig-tree, whose fruit hung in ripe clusters among its forked leaves; the arbour commanded a view over the garden, and there, when she had plucked some of the figs, Sieglinde made Sir Willibald sit beside her and continue his tale while they ate the fruit; the south wind blew softly through the vines, and the air seemed full of a distant and wonderful music.

'Do you not hear it?' Sieglinde asked Sir Willibald; 'it is beautiful, only I cannot quite follow the melody.'

Sir Willibald smiled but made no answer; at length he said—

'Dear lady, I have now told you all, and it is growing late. To-morrow at the dawn of day I must return.'

Sieglinde started and looked round; it was true, the sun had gone down, and the dusk was fast gathering; the day had passed as an hour.

'So long as you were speaking of my lord I forgot how the time ran away,' said Sieglinde, 'and I fear I have wearied you, Sir Willibald; go and take your rest for the morrow's journey. As for me, I shall stay here a while longer, for I think I shall never be weary again.'

When Sieglinde was alone she remained thinking of Lord Agathos and recalling all that Sir Willibald had told her of him till her heart burned within her, and it seemed as though he himself stood beside her and talked with her; at length she remembered the words of the message, and taking the golden circlet with its crystal from her forehead, she looked at it attentively; it was clear as purest water, and shot back rays of white light in the moonlight when she gazed into it.

'"When it shows the colour of pain,"' she murmured to herself, '"there will be great cause for fear"; what is the colour of pain? It shows only my lord's colour now.'

The moon had risen high in the heaven when Sieglinde at last unwillingly sought repose, for the garden seemed even more strangely beautiful by this light of the moon than by that of the sun, and the unearthly music was floating all about her still.

As she passed softly like a white spirit through the sleeping flowers, her thoughts fell of themselves into a little song which she sang to herself in a low voice—

'Pain—what is pain? it hath a pleasant sound;
If this be pain, thrust home, dear pain, thy wound,
For love is pain that seeks and hath not found.

Joy turns to pain when running to its flood,
Love dies for joy that cannot hold its good,
So pain must then be love misunderstood.'

CHAPTER IV.

THE autumn with its mellowing woods and fruits, its harvests of corn and grape was past, and now the rain had set in, and mists folded the landscape in their heavy veils, and hung dankly from the motionless boughs of the fading trees.

The days were fast shortening, and Sieglinde sat amongst her maidens several hours every day spinning the wool which was to make winter garments for her poorer tenantry.

But when the long evenings fell she found the time hang heavily. One day she was passing listlessly along the cloister at dusk, when a thought struck her, and she quickened her steps towards a low door at the farther end of the cloister beside the chapel, and knocked upon it gently. The door was opened by the chaplain, who brought Sieglinde into the little room which was his study. A lamp in a niche in the wall shed a circle of light upon the wooden table below, which was covered with manuscripts and books, some bound in costly vellum with scarlet letterings for the service of the sanctuary, others in parchment, filling besides several rows of shelves; a much worn copy of the Scriptures, in which the chaplain had been reading, lay open just beneath the lamp.

'I have come to ask you, father,' began Sieglinde, when she had taken the seat which Guido placed for her, 'if you will be so good as to help me with my reading; you know that when my lord was here he began to teach me, but since he left us I fear I have forgotten many things, and now that the winter days are upon us I shall have time in the long evenings to study in some of those great books, if you will allow me,' said Sieglinde, casting a long look of admiration upon the learned volumes.

'And so become perfectly wise,' said Guido, smiling gently, 'Well, daughter, I shall be happy to give you all the help I can; and it will indeed be a delightful surprise for Lord Agathos when he returns to find you able to take your part in reading these books that he loves so well.'

Sieglinde's face brightened, and she approached the books, and began to turn over their pages as though then and there she would master all their mysteries.

'Tell me, father, which of all these books did my lord love best?' she asked after a pause.

The chaplain laid his hand upon the worn volume open on the

table. 'This,' he answered, 'is the book he loved best, and so I think you will like to study it too. Other books contain the wisdom of the world, but this of the Kingdom; it is the field where we must search for the buried treasure, the leaven we hide in our hearts till the whole is leavened.'

From that day Sieglinde resumed her reading lessons, and many were the happy hours she spent in study and in listening at the same time to Guido's deep and holy teachings. Every day, too, she looked at the crystal which shone clear as sunlit water, and thought of the message, and Lord Agathos' promise of a special token of his love to be sent her before long, some precious gift it would prove, she thought, or best of all the welcome herald of his return; but no messenger had come as yet, and so the days drew on to Christmas.

One day—it was near the holy time—when Sieglinde was reading beside Guido, they suddenly heard the warder's horn from the tower. Sieglinde started up, for in the depth of this winter time strangers visiting the Castle were few and far between.

'Perhaps it is the messenger whom I expect from my lord,' she said to Guido, for until then she had not mentioned Sir Willibald's message.

In a few moments one of her maidens entered with an eager face, saying: 'There is a traveller come, madam, who craves your hospitality for the night; he says he is a merchantman, and will amply repay your bounty by a sight only of his wares, of which he has some rare bargains—come from Cathay itself, he declares, and truly, madam, if one may judge by the size of the bales that the poor man's back must have ached under, we may expect a fine sight enough.'

Sieglinde had sat down again with a disappointed look when she heard the girl's first words, but she answered smilingly: 'Well, Odilia, here's matter enough for all of you for the rest of the evening, I perceive; you may make the poor man welcome, but I advise you to be as chary with your staters, girl, as you are sometimes with your needle-stitches, for staters at least have wings, and will fly away before you are aware.'

'Nay, then, I wish my needle were more like them if they do that, madam,' said Odilia, laughing saucily as she vanished.

'This cannot be the messenger, I think, father,' said Sieglinde presently; 'but yet I shall not rest satisfied now unless I see everybody who comes to the Castle, and I think I will go and have a peep and see what sort of show the man makes with his wares.'

'So we may close the books,' said Guido, smiling.

Sieglinde found many of her household, indeed, all the female part of it, assembled in the Castle hall, where a great fire blazed on the hearth, in front of which a space had been cleared, and here the merchant had opened one of his bales, and spread out his stuffs, whose rich bright folds fell one against the other in tempting harmonies of colour.

'To him who has a seeing eye,' said the merchant, 'such dyes as mine will commend themselves for their richness and lustre, well warranted to stand the ravages of time'—and as the rest made way for Sieglinde to pass—'but here comes the bountiful lady herself,' he continued, bowing low, 'who will bear out what I say, and for her I have still better sights in store than these.'

The merchant had a face much bronzed by foreign suns, out of which his dark eyes gleamed; his dress was worn and rough, presenting the greater contrast to his wares, and to his polished manners, which had an excess of obsequiousness, acquired perhaps in Eastern countries.

'These are fine colours enough indeed, merchant,' said Sieglinde, 'for those who like them; but as for me I wear but one colour now, and I do not see that one among them.'

'Ah, the rarest for the rare!' said the merchant, with a sidelong glance at Sieglinde's white robe, 'and I can show you some costly and precious things that I have been lucky enough to come across in my travels, and by the prophet's beard—the holy rood, I should say—worthy of yourself, fair lady, if you will do me the honour to cast your eyes on them.' Saying this he signed to a lad to help him to bring forward another smaller package, which he proceeded to unpack. As one after the other the costly Eastern stuffs were brought forth and shaken out in their gossamer lightness, woven in exquisite arabesques of faintly blending hues, or inwrought with threads of gold and silver running in shining mazes through them, Sieglinde could not contain her surprise and admiration, in which a perfect chorus of voices joined. At last the merchant, who seemed to have been exerting himself greatly in the opening and showing of his goods, for the perspiration was standing in great drops on his forehead, drew out what looked like a handful of white silk, and, with his eyes fixed upon Sieglinde, shook it out into a multitude of web-like folds, and approaching her respectfully, threw it like a bridal veil over her head, from whence it fell fleecily to the floor. A murmur of admiration escaped from all present, and Sieglinde gathered it round her wonderingly.

'How very exquisite it is!' she said, 'and now that I look closely I perceive a beautiful pattern running through it.'

'But if you will do me the favour to step under this lamp you will see it much better,' said the merchantman.

Sieglinde did so, and under the red light she could plainly see a woven tracery of faint colours like those reflected upon snow.

'I fancied it had been all white,' she said.

'That is according to the light you see it in,' answered the merchant, with a smile; 'but the colours are so exquisite that they can scarcely be said to mar its whiteness, and I have something here also which will match and set them off to still further advantage—marvels of fine workmanship from Cathay.'

So saying he unlocked a casket of sweetly-smelling fir-wood, and drew from it long strings of what at first sight looked like beads, but on closer inspection were seen to be small Indian shells of the most delicate iridescent hues, linked together by gold filagree work.

'Honour me by inspecting the workmanship of this, fair lady,' said the merchant, with a swift turn of his hand twining one of the glittering strings round Sieglinde's arm. 'Nay, keep it thus, madam, 't would be a pity to see the bauble anywhere but where it looks so charmingly.'

Sieglinde smiled, and then frowned slightly as she said—

'In what school have you conned over your pretty speeches, merchantman?'

'In a big one, I think, lady,' answered the merchant. 'I have travelled far and wide, beyond seas where the golden oranges and pomegranates flourish, and strange birds with brilliant feathers fly among the trees, and the ladies' eyes are as black as sloeberries. Oh! I can show you some of the pretty things they wear there, toys of Bagdad—see here these emeralds—real emeralds from the mines of Persia; hold them up to the light, watch their sparkle—one thinks of the sunlight on sea waves at morning, or the rainbow's edge in a thunder-shower.'

It was a fan which the merchant held out to Sieglinde, made of the feathers of tropical birds, whose dazzling tints flashed hither and thither with every motion, and rivalled the glitter of the precious stones with which the handle was clustered. Sieglinde could not repress a cry of admiration as she took it.

'Madam,' said Odilia, 'you now only want a throne, and a golden footstool for your feet.'

'This is a costly thing indeed, merchant,' said Sieglinde. 'What may be its price?'

'It's price? Oh, as to that, I would be content to leave it to you, sure as I am of your generosity, and you will find that the longer you use it, the more loth will you be to part with it. I had it from a lady as fair as yourself, and she only parted with it in exchange for a still prettier plaything that I happened to have with me, and that she took a fancy for—a little gold-handled poniard, chased and jewelled most exquisitely, and fitting for her hand and her neck where it was sheathed one day.'

Sieglinde turned a shade paler, and gave the fan again to the merchant.

'But you have not seen half its beauties yet, fair lady,' cried the merchant eagerly, 'see here!' and touching the largest emerald at the handle's tip, the fan suddenly flew open like a flash of light, and disclosed within a small crystal mirror set about with amber. Bowing respectfully, the merchant drew nearer to Sieglinde, and as he held it up before her she saw her own face reflected in the mirror with the wonderful veil wreathed round her.

'But I could not buy it, good merchant,' said Sieglinde, smiling; 'I have no riches to spare for such things, although, indeed, I have never seen anything so beautiful; you must seek some wealthier customer.'

'Perhaps, though it might not be convenient to you to pay for it in gold, you may nevertheless have something you would part with in exchange for it?' suggested the merchant; 'for instance, if I may be so bold, I notice that you wear a crystal on your brow, not nearly so fine and large as this of mine—yours, I suppose, does not serve as a mirror and reflect—yourself, for example?'

'No, never,' answered Sieglinde.

'I thought not,' the merchant went on; 'now this of mine would always be at hand for that necessary purpose of a fair lady, and besides, is almost worth its weight in gold—still I should be willing perhaps even to sacrifice something for the sake of obliging——'

'My crystal!' interrupted Sieglinde hastily, as she raised her hand to her forehead to feel for the circlet, and pushed aside a fold of the veil that had fallen over it for a moment. 'You little know what you say, merchant; this crystal is worth not only your fan a thousand times over, but all the world to me, and I am as little likely to part with it as with my soul itself.'

'That may be! A keepsake, no doubt?' said the merchant, smiling carelessly. 'In that case nothing is left for me to say, for I have found by experience there is no trafficking to be done in those kind of goods; their value is entirely an imaginary one—a fancy one, as we say, depending not at all upon their market cost. Oh! many and many a thing has passed through my hands which their owners fancied worth all the world to them, as you did just now; but in my hands, fair lady, I assure you, they were seen to be nothing but a little tinsel and dust, like the hearts they were worn upon once.'

'I must go now; but I will keep this veil,' said Sieglinde, wrapping its misty folds round her, for she shivered as though she were cold, 'and for its price, I will settle with you to-morrow.'

'At your pleasure, fair lady; any time will do for me, and by all the goddesses I swear you will like it the better the longer you wear it; and as for the chains——'

'Chains? Oh, the bracelets! I had forgotten them,' said Sieglinde, attempting to unwind them from her arm; but the merchant stopped her.

'Nay, keep them, lady, they look so well, and must not be hastily handled; you can settle to-morrow—to-morrow brings the luck to-day lacks—or worse,' he added, in a lower tone; but Sieglinde had gone.

As she passed through the corridor, she met Guido coming towards her with a lamp in his hand; and though she would rather that he had not seen her new possessions just then, being afraid that he might think her vain, she stopped, and said—

'Oh, father, you must really go and look at the merchant's wares;

he has some wonderful and beautiful things to show. See here'—and Sieglinde held out a fold of the veil beneath the lamp.

'It seems indeed very beautiful,' said Guido, looking down at it. 'Is it to please Lord Agathos that you buy it?'

'Yes; indeed it is for him,' answered Sieglinde eagerly. 'He will admire it when he comes, for it is his own colour, you see, except that in a particular light you can perceive a sort of tracery.'

'I fear I must leave the Castle, daughter,' said Guido. 'A messenger has been here to call me to Gottfried, the charcoal-burner, who is dying, and I am even now on my way thither. His hut lies some three miles away, the roads are bad, and I may be detained; but I shall return to-morrow, if possible. I would that one of our lord's knights happened to be with us now,' he added, a shade of uneasiness crossing his brow.

'Why, good father, there is no cause for fear,' said Sieglinde, smiling. 'You have often been away from the Castle before; why should you be anxious now? There is no fear of any sudden attack from Kuno, I hope, for nothing has been heard of him of late; and, if there were, all my men are well-armed and trusty, and perhaps—for who can tell?—our lord's messenger may arrive whilst you are away.'

Guido passed his hand across his forehead, and was silent for a moment; then he said, as though trying to shake off some haunting impression—

'I know not what it is. I think some trial is approaching you, which makes me loth to leave you. But it may not be so; at all events, I can but commend you to God's keeping.'

'Father, I wish you had not to leave me,' said Sieglinde, with a sudden thrill of fear; but Guido, looking upwards, lifted his hands over her in blessing, saying—'God bless you! Trust in Him!' and was gone.

Guido's foreboding words and manner made Sieglinde thoughtful for some time; but she tried to reassure herself, and the impression wore off as she occupied herself in admiring the veil, folding and unfolding it in different ways, and tracing out the pattern which was clearly visible by the light of her lamp, though it was hard to follow, so intricate were its windings; but amidst its mazes a bird with its wings spread for flight, and a cluster of apples could be discerned, repeated again and again in faint soft hues. At last she laid it aside, and, taking the circlet from her head, looked earnestly at the crystal. She started, for she fancied that she saw colours reflected there. She wiped it carefully, polished it, and gazed again, turning it every way close to the flame of the lamp; but the colours were still there. Then she saw within its clear depths the bird with the spread wings, and the apples traced in the faint colours of the veil.

CHAPTER V.

SIEGLINDE hoped that by the morning light the reflection in the crystal would have disappeared; but when she looked into it the next day, before placing it on her forehead, she saw to her distress that the tracing was there still. She therefore resolved to return the veil to the merchant before he left, and meanwhile she locked it away that she might not be tempted to waste the hours in admiring it, and went into the chapel to pray. The talk among Sieglinde's maidens that day ran upon the merchant and his wonderful wares, the like of which had never been seen before, and the marvellous tales of his adventures by land and sea with which he had amused them after Sieglinde left the previous evening, were eagerly retailed now for their mistress's wonder.

On Sieglinde's arm the Indian bracelets still glittered, for she had found on attempting to unwind them that she only entangled the shells together, and supposing there must be some trick or spring in the manner of their fastening, had waited until she could ask the merchant to give her the secret. In spite of herself, she found herself impatiently waiting for him; the embroidery at which she sat among her maidens had never seemed so wearisome and so chafing to her spirit before. From the Castle windows they could see the snow beginning to fall in small, persistent flakes like white dust; the grey sky hung over the level plain with the silence of death; the few trees, marking the river's course, stood stretching their dark arms to the cold caress of the snow, and the road was fast becoming an indistinguishable whiteness.

'What a happy thing is this merchant's coming to the Castle for us, dear madam,' said Odilia. 'It is enough to keep us all in spirits these dark days, only to listen to his stories of the great world, of which, forsooth, we hear little enough at most times, and to see his lovely things. Oh! I hope he will show us something new to-day when you call him up, for you must know, madam, that he only displays his best things when you are there. As for us, the gorgeous stuffs and outlandish shawls are sufficient, but no jewels, nor wonderful fans and mirrors; but for you he has a whole store of fine things yet to see, so he told us; did he not, Emilia?'

But Emilia was humming a tune under her breath, and seemed longing to try her voice; and when Odilia laughed, and asked her what she sang, she said—

'It is only a little song the merchant taught me last night. It is what the sailors sing, so he said, when they weigh anchor to sail to those wonderful countries.'

'The merchant! Always the merchant,' exclaimed Sieglinde fretfully. 'It seems we shall hear enough of him, at all events; but as

I suppose his song must be about something pleasanter than himself, let us have it, Emilia, if you please.'

Thus exhorted, the girl immediately broke into a pretty, rocking air—

'Awake! away! spread wings and fly,—
The burning dawn has risen,
Sweet day has come to all—ah, why
Not here within thy prison?

Know'st thou the world is wide and fair?
Its ways lie broad and sunny?
And fame, and praise, and pleasure there
Taste sweeter than the honey?

Ah! how the waves laugh round our prow—
A painted pledge to kiss on,
The world is at our feet; but thou
Must weep within a prison.'

Applause greeted Emilia's song from everybody except Sieglinde; she only stooped her head over the embroidery, for the melody was sweet, and the words of the song moved her, although she did not exactly know why, but a tear hung on her eyelid and fell down her cheek.

'It seems a sad song to me, Emilia,' she said; 'it makes one draw one's breath tight, like a poor bird in a cage that longs to be on the wing.'

'Like this nightingale of mine, fair lady,' said a voice, and they all started to see the merchant standing before them, smiling and saluting Sieglinde with a beseeching air; he held a cage in his hand with gilded bars, through which a bird looked out mournfully. 'I beg a thousand pardons if I intrude, madam; but they told me you desired to see a few more of my treasures to-day, and no one seems to have heard my knocking, so gaily and melodiously were you engaged.'

'Not altogether so, merchant,' said Sieglinde, 'and as for thy treasures there must have been some mistake in the message, for I am not in want of any of them, and indeed should be glad if you would take back the veil I bought of you yesterday, as I have not yet paid you for it—but to let that rest for the present—does this poor bird sing?'

'For you, madam,' answered the merchant, putting his finger through the bars of the cage, and stroking the prisoner's wings, which Sieglinde perceived were clipped. Immediately the bird lifted its little head, and its throat swelled, and after a few efforts it gave a long drawn liquid note more like a sigh than a song.

'Poor thing, it has a sweet voice,' said Sieglinde.

'That is nothing,' said the merchant, 'sometimes it will sing there by the hour together about the country I brought it from, or perchance, of the joys of freedom, and longing to see the world, just

as you might feel yourself, madam, so like a human creature is it, and so natural for young things to wish to try their wings.'

Just then, as though the poor bird had understoood the merchant's words, it broke into a few bars of loud, sweet, melancholy notes, which thrilled upon Sieglinde's ears, and she almost held her breath to listen, for it seemed to her as though there were some secret in the bird's song which was meant for her if she could but have interpreted it aright; was it that she too was little better than a captive, forbidden to see beyond the walls of her cage, perhaps forsaken and forgotten? The song was so sad that she forgot all beside these thoughts, her eyes filled with tears as she listened; and all the while the bird sang the merchant never moved his eyes from Sieglinde's face. The bird was still singing when there came a sudden loud knocking at the Castle postern, and looking out, they saw a little band of men in gay, fantastic dresses, advancing across the courtyard through the snow, which was falling now in slow, steady flakes from the gloomy sky.

'Who are they?' inquired the merchant.

'Oh, we are in luck to-day!' cried Odilia; 'here come the Christmas mummers, madam.'

'They may seem strange to you, coming as you do from foreign lands,' said Sieglinde to the merchant, 'they come to us always at this time of the year when Our Lord was born, for a little innocent amusement of our people. Lord Agathos used to make them welcome when he was at home.'

'And who may he be, fair lady?' inquired the merchant in a low voice.

'Lord Agathos? he is the lord of this Castle, and of all within it,' answered Sieglinde briefly; but the merchant had turned away, and appeared to be busy with his treasures.

When Sieglinde went down into the great hall she found a lively scene of merriment. A space had been hastily cleared for the mummers, who with masks or blackened faces, and wreaths of holly and bay on their heads, stood in a circle singing the Christmas carols, while the servants and retainers came crowding into the lower part of the hall, where two of the maids mixed the wassail-cup and wreathed it with holly, and another threw fresh logs on the blazing hearth, before which a couple of deerhounds, disturbed by the unusual noise, were showing their teeth at the intruders, although held in leash by a little bright-faced page. The blackened rafters of the hall rang to the joyful words of the old carols, and every one joined in their choruses. Without, the sky was fast darkening with the snow, and the short winter's day already closing in.

CHAPTER VI.

THE merchant had followed Sieglinde and her maidens into the hall, and now mingled with the mummers and the rest in the pauses of the carol-singing, while they played on their rough viols and horns, and the wassail-cup was passed round. Sieglinde was seated upon the dais at the upper end of the hall with Odilia and Emilia; the merchant approached them, and kneeling down, opened out a Persian carpet of the softest dyes and texture, and spread it before them.

'Your feet, fair ladies,' he said, 'were never meant to press cold stones or vulgar rushes, we do not so in Persia; take this and try its softness, it will be honoured in the use; these are but rough sights and sounds for you, madam, who seem born for choicer things,' he went on addressing Sieglinde, 'Ah! would that I could show you some of the revels and amusements of foreign countries—exquisite dances, whose perfect, rhythmic grace would seem but music in motion, and the music reciprocally to have imbibed something of the airy charm of the dance, so perfectly do they harmonise; enchanting gardens I could show you, lighted by thousands of lamps, thick as the jewels on Aladdin's trees; strange and wonderful animals, who perform feats of agility and intelligence; tournaments and jousts in abundance, crowded with brave, handsome knights and fair ladies, among whom you should be queen of beauty; but perhaps I do but chant an old ditty—you may have seen all these things. Have you ever travelled?'

'No, never,' answered Sieglinde, who was listening eagerly, and at the same time she could not help wondering at the polished air and speech of the merchant; he seemed now to be more like a knight who had travelled and seen the world, towards whom she felt as an equal, than a merchant plodding the countries with his wares, and though his dress was still mean, his whole air and bearing now so overcame that disadvantage as to leave it no room for notice.

'No, I have never travelled in foreign countries, though I should indeed like to see them,' said Sieglinde; 'indeed, I have never lived anywhere except here and at my old home in the mountains'—the merchant made a gesture of surprise and regret—'and now that my lord is away on his other estate, and I know not when he is likely to return——' At that moment two of the mummers with masks over their faces approached, bearing the wassail-bowl; the merchant smiled, and taking a daintily shaped goblet of silver in his hand, dipped it in the spiced wine, and held it out to Sieglinde, who raised it to her lips.

While she was in the act of doing so, and happening unwittingly by some secret fascination to lift her eyes to the merchant's face, she met his own bending above her with such a strange malignant gleam in them, cold as steel and cruel as fire, that all the blood rushed upon her heart, and the cup shook suddenly

in her hand. The merchant did not, however, appear to notice her agitation, but said in a deferential voice, so soft that it was almost a whisper: 'You were saying that you do not know when your lord will return—I beg a thousand pardons for interrupting you—yes?' —but Sieglinde had turned from him and was speaking to Emilia. The noise and mirth now grew louder, for the merchant had set the mummers to games, and presently leaving Sieglinde's side, he began to show them some wonderful feats of Indian jugglery, at which all stood open-mouthed. He had thrown a fine yellow silk mantle over his dress, and moved hither and thither among the excited throng who pressed around him; now he had the goblet in his hand, into which he poured what seemed exhaustless wine, passing it round among the company; then he was tossing coloured balls to and fro, which seemed to change colour in the air like stars of magic light. Sieglinde watched the flushed, excited faces about her, and hearing the tumult swell louder every minute, became uneasy; things were never thus when Lord Agathos was there; she felt vaguely that some alien influence was at work which she must thwart, and turned to Emilia to express her wishes, but both Emilia and Odilia had slipt away from her side, and she was alone on the dais. Then, as she watched the wonderful tossing, changing balls her eyes became dazzled, and her ears confused with the noise, her brain seemed dizzy, she clapped her hands, and stood up to watch the merchant better, and though sometimes the yellow mantle gleamed like flame far away down the hall and sometimes near at hand, Sieglinde thought that the merchant's eyes still watched her too. Outside, the wind had risen and drove fiercely past, shaking the windows, and sending the snow hissing and spluttering down upon the glowing fire-logs on the hearth. All at once, when the tumult was at its height, and Sieglinde was straining her eyes towards the merchant, who chanced to be at the further end of the hall in the thick of the crowd, she perceived the figure of a stranger sitting by the hearth from which the hounds had slunk away, and their keeper, the bright-faced page was in the midst of the games. Sieglinde rubbed her eyes and looked again, but it was still there; it was the bent figure of an old woman, poorly clad in a peasant's cloak and hood, which was drawn over and concealed her face; she must have taken shelter here from the night and the cold, for she leaned over the logs and spread out her thin hands to the red glow which threw into relief the dark crouching figure, so that at first Sieglinde thought it had been a shadow. Nobody appeared to notice her, nor she the scene of merriment around her; as though she had been alone in her forest hut seeking a little warmth from the dying embers of her fire of sticks, she sat motionless and absorbed, while it struck Sieglinde as strange that none of the merrymakers appeared to see her, but passed and re-passed her in their frolics without bestowing upon her so much as a passing glance. Sieglinde watched this figure for

some minutes, while a strange, unaccountable chill gathered at her heart; then, breaking with an effort the growing spell, she called one of the servants to her and asked—

'Who is that poor woman at the fire, and how did she come here?'

The man threw back his flushed face and stared in the direction of the chimney-place.

'Ah, I did not notice her before;' he said, 'I know not how she came in here, my lady. Shall I turn her out?'

'No, indeed; but go and ask her what she does here, and how she came in,' said Sieglinde, relieved to find that the man also saw the old woman, who could not therefore be an apparition, but still conscious of that dread within herself. She watched him approach the old woman and address her roughly, for the merchant's fatal wine seemed to have influenced everybody, and made him unmindful of Lord Agathos' commands as to compassion and hospitality. In a few moments he came back to Sieglinde with a scared look on his face.

'She will not go; she says she must speak to you, my lady, save the mark! She has been a long while waiting, she says, and marry, one might wait long enough before one wished to speak to the old witch, for of all ugly faces it has ever been my fortune to set eyes on, she has the ugliest, it scares one only to look at her, something in her look there is that makes one's blood run cold. She does not belong to these parts, she says, and so I believe, for I never saw her hereabouts, and never wish to see her again, for if she's not a witch out of Bedlam, this isn't a merry Christmas frolic, and if I may be so bold as give advice, my lady, you will bid me turn her out of this in double quick time.'

While the man was speaking the merchant had been slowly drawing nearer, surrounded by a boisterous, laughing group, his yellow mantle streaming over his shoulder; he held the silver goblet at arm's length, waving it above his head; his eyes were fastened on Sieglinde. On the other side the strange woman had risen from her seat, and was also drawing near, her dark, hooded figure looking like a shadow amid the gaudy attire of the mummers. It was towards her and not the merchant that Sieglinde's face was turned; some fascination held her to the approaching figure, and made her seek anxiously the woman's face; but whether it were that the hood cast so deep a shade, or that Sieglinde's eyes were dazzled, she could not catch a glimpse of it, and then in a moment the merchant's mantle flamed between, and he was holding the goblet to her lips—

'Lady, fairest lady, taste the nectar of the gods, the ambrosial wine—the elixir of life and perpetual youth. It is for you—for you!'

She strove to turn her head, but the merchant's eyes burned upon her, and their dreadful spell made her powerless as the victim transfixed by the serpent's glare; her brain reeled, a confused

applause, a vociferation of laughter was in her ears, the perfume of the wine in her nostrils, her lips touched the goblet's rim, and she began to taste the heavy sweetness of the drops. At that moment, high above the tumult, rose a piercing voice, that thrilled through the fatal spell to the core of Sieglinde's soul—

'Taste not the cup! its sparkling flood
Will turn to poison in thy blood,
The draught of fatal sweetness past
To dregs of bitterness at last;
That cup shall be one day a whole
Vial of woe to drown thy soul!'

As she chanted, or rather wailed these words, the strange woman stood erect, raising her withered arms to heaven like some Sibyl of old, and shook them in rhythm with her song. The excited throng shrank back from her right and left, sobered for a moment by a nameless dread, and the merchant, turning fiercely from Sieglinde, confronted the witch, if witch she were, with a flame of passion in his face.

'Oh, it is you, hag,' he said, in a soft, terrible voice; 'and how came *you* here, pray, skeleton of the feast? You were not aware who was Master of the Revels perhaps? doubtless you were not, and therefore, pardoning your unwelcome intrusion for this once, I command you to take hence that uncomely visage of yours with all speed.'

For all reply the strange woman crossed her thin arms upon her breast, and stood facing the merchant in deadly silence; and in that momentary pause the storm could be heard raging outside.

'Gentlemen,' said the merchant, in louder tones, 'will you submit to have your pleasure spoiled by this hideous old witch out of Tartarus?—or rather, Tartarus, for aught we know, may be too good a place for such as she. It lies with you to make short work with her. Seize her then! witch, sorceress, trafficker in the black art, seize her! Turn her out whence she came. Ha, you shrink? cravens, poltroons!'

'Witch, sorceress!' rose the cry on every side—the cry of terror and rage. 'Don't touch her, she will harm you, the evil eye is upon us all! We are bewitched, she has turned me as cold as the grave; she has made the fire sputter and burn blue; see, even the dogs know her, and hang their tails, and whine!'

'Witch, is she, my merry men?' the merchant's scoffing voice rose above the din. 'Helga herself perhaps—the Black Gentleman's bargain, ha, ha! Sorceress, hag! have at her then, my bravos! What do we want with *her* in our merry devils' revels—make short work with her, as becomes you, hearts of oak! What does the mistress say?'—he turned suddenly to Sieglinde.

'Do not harm her, but send her away,' she muttered faintly. 'Could death itself turn one so chill?'

They had seized upon the frail withered form, and were dragging her to the door; but ere she reached it she turned her head, and her voice rose once more, shrilling to Sieglinde's ears—

'O soul, beware! for hell is near,
Break, break the spell that holds thee,
Lest thy heart break in wailing there,
And endless doom enfold thee.

Think on thy lord—thy plighted word,
And cast the fatal chain,
For on thy brow burns even now
The colour of his pain!'

The piercing voice died away into the night—Sieglinde had not seen her face.

'She is gone; an end to her jackal shrieks,' said the merchant, coming back to Sieglinde; 'but you are faint, fairest; take a little wine, you but touched it with your lip before that ugly beldame broke in with her idiot saws. But this will put new spirit into you, and make you forget her at the very first sip. I swear—it is the very elixir of life!'

But Sieglinde recoiled a step, and looking straight into the merchant's face said: 'I will not!'

She scarcely knew what happened then; the terrible, malignant gleam which she had seen once before, lit up the merchant's eyes; the mummers seemed to close round her, for when she looked for help she saw only their grinning masks; there was a low, hoarse murmur in her ears which swelled quickly into a wild shout—

'Seize her, seize her! back to the Wolf's Stronghold!' and one of the mummers, tearing his mask away before her eyes, waved it above his stormy triumphant face; it was Hermann. The deadly fumes of the goblet which the merchant was still holding before her seemed to rise around her like a mist, and stifle her heart with a sickening faintness; it seemed as though she could not cry out. Suddenly there was a movement amid the throng, and through the wild faces, and the dust, and the deadly fumes, she saw Guido the priest standing in the doorway, pale as one from another world, with his arms lifted like a cross.

Sieglinde gave a cry. 'At your peril, cowards—stand back from me!' She wrenched the glittering baubles from her arm, and scattered them like a handful of dust to the wind. The spell was broken: she was dimly aware of rough hands striving to tear her back, of threatening faces surging round, of the merchant's hissing voice at her ear; but as though she heard not, and saw not, she still held on her way towards the door, where the piercing night-wind and the snow were drifting in, and fell fainting at Guido's feet.

CHAPTER VII.

GUIDO raised Sieglinde gently from the ground, and the sharp night-air, though it chilled to the very bones, quickly revived her.

'Take courage, daughter,' he said; 'summon all your servants; traitors are within, but by God's help they shall be ousted, if you show a brave face.'

Sieglinde looked round on the tumultuous scene, standing by Guido's side, and, raising her head, cried in a clear voice: 'For Agathos! true liege-men, who is on Lord Agathos' side? Death to all traitors!'

A shout answered her 'Agathos! Agathos!' which in its turn was answered by another, 'Oscar! for Oscar and the Wolf's Stronghold!'

For a few minutes there was a fierce clash of weapons down the hall, mingled with savage cries. Sieglinde stood watching the conflict, pale as death, but unflinching, and cheering her followers by her presence, while Guido prayed earnestly for the issue. She could see, in the midst of the fight, two men who had closed in a desperate struggle; one was faithful Werner the watchman, who was wielding his broadsword bravely, but his opponent was Hermann the huntsman, who, with his dark savage face and huge limbs, fought like a wild beast, and seemed to bear down all before him, leaving little else to Werner than to parry his well-aimed thrusts; but Werner had been a fighter, too, in his youth, and though his hardy old age was no match for Hermann's full vigour of strength, he had learnt by long practice some old and effective sword-play, so that when Hermann, becoming weary of his steady parrying, pressed closer with hotter thrusts to make an end, Werner's cool, keen eye, watching his opportunity, suddenly leaped into fire, and taking the offensive, he made a dexterous lunge at Hermann, wounding him in the right shoulder, and causing his arm with its weapon to fall powerless by his side. Infuriated by rage and pain, Hermann drew the hunting-knife from his belt with his left hand, and sprang upon Werner with a savage cry; but ere the fierce attack could reach its aim, a sword flashed before his eyes, struck up his knife lightly with its flat, and then, swift as lightning, with a straight and deadly stroke, felled him to the ground.

It was then, through the terrible whirl and dust, that Sieglinde first saw, in the thick of the conflict, a tall silver-mailed figure, with waving plumes and sword that seemed to deal resistless blows.

It was he who stood now above the fallen Hermann, calling upon the traitors to surrender and lay down their arms.

'Oh, look, father!' exclaimed Sieglinde to Guido, 'one of my lord's knights is here.'

The rest of the struggle was but brief. When the conspirators saw the powerful Hermann laid prostrate, they felt that the best they

could do was to obey the bidding of the silver knight. One after the other, as they advanced to lay down their arms, in the sullen savage faces Sieglinde recognised her father's retainers, who had once been so familiar to her in her old home.

Ghastly enough they looked now in the mock gaudy rags and tags of their mummers' dresses, daubed and soiled with blood and dust, that hung round them as dismally as trappings round a death's head.

'Put them under safe custody in the hold, with straw, and bread and water,' were Sieglinde's orders when they were brought before her, 'and to-morrow, at break of day, let them be taken blindfold. under strong escort, to my lord's boundaries, and there dismissed to the Wolf's Stronghold.'

'I will be their escort myself, and see them safe off Lord Agathos' territory,' said the knight Eginhard grimly.

As for the merchant, he had disappeared in the confusion, and Sieglinde could learn nothing of the manner of his flight, though he must have taken care to pack up and carry away his goods, since nothing of them could be discovered. He had been observed at the beginning of the fray egging on the conspirators with furious words and gestures, though it did not appear that he had taken an actual part himself in the fight, and it was supposed that, upon the unexpected appearance of Lord Agathos' knight, he had slunk away unperceived, hastily collected his wares, and escaped under cover of the night.

'I would he had been taken prisoner with the rest,' remarked Sieglinde, with a shudder; 'or that we had ourselves shut the Castle doors upon him, and seen him safely away.'

Just then Sir Eginhard, for that was the name of the deliverer knight, came up and greeted Sieglinde.

'Oh, Sir Eginhard, how shall we thank you? You have saved us all, and the Castle,' she said.

'No, lady, One stronger than I must have done that,' he answered; 'but tell me, how did the merchant and the conspirators gain an entrance here?'

Sieglinde looked distressed, and telling Sir Eginhard hastily that she would tell him the whole story when he had rested and refreshed himself, and had given her some news of Lord Agathos, she was turning to leave the hall, when Sir Eginhard said—

'I think I must have given yonder hoary giant all but his *coup de grâce*. I will go and see what I can do for him if he still lives.'

Then Sieglinde remembered the fall of Hermann, and she went too, and saw him lying deathly pale and covered with blood; but his eyes glared still with rage, and he muttered imprecations upon every one who approached him. Sieglinde bent over him and said—

'Hermann, cease from your blasphemies; your wounds shall be well attended to.'

'Ah!' muttered Sir Eginhard, 'if he had been the merchant, and

he had closed with me instead of slinking off like a coward as he is, I would have given no quarter.'

Sieglinde gave directions that Hermann should be well cared for, and his wounds dressed; and while Sieglinde and Eginhard talked together, Guido watched beside the wounded man.

'I trust you are not wounded, Sir Eginhard,' said Sieglinde. 'I saw you were in the very heat of the fray.'

'Not a scratch, thanks to this good sword of mine, which has never failed me yet,' he answered. And then, while she set meat before him, and he ate and drank, she asked him of Lord Agathos.

'I think he had liefer have come himself this day instead of sending me,' said Sir Eginhard.

'*Himself!*' echoed Sieglinde, turning quite pale, as though a sword had pierced through her soul, and she knew not if it were pain or joy.

'Yes,' continued Sir Eginhard; 'for the anxiety which he seemed to have for you, knowing somewhat of your danger by some means as I suppose; but by the grief in his face I guessed as much, only he would not come at present, he said, but sent me, saying he knew this sword of mine invincible. But was there not a poor stranger woman here to-night?'

'What makes you ask? Did you see aught of her then?' asked Sieglinde.

'Yes; I met one out in the storm, and told her she looked too frail to be there, and bade her follow me here for shelter; but she said that she had been already driven hence, and so held on her way. I think she was making for our lord's country, for she took the road I had just come, and peered about for the track I had left in the snow; so, though I pitied her sorely, I had to come on here and leave her, and whether she ever comes thither or is buried half a foot deep by now—which is the likelier case—I cannot tell.'

'Did you not know her name, or aught about her, Sir Eginhard?' Sieglinde inquired again.

'How should I know her more than you did, Lady Sieglinde?' answered Sir Eginhard in a stern voice. 'But I must tell you that it seemed to me a very strange thing that one so old and feeble should have been turned from this door on such a night as this.'

Sieglinde turned away her face from Sir Eginhard.

'The merchant said she was a witch,' she said in a low voice.

But Sir Eginhard still looked at her reproachfully, and spoke not a word; and she could learn no further of Lord Agathos from him, for when she pressed him, he answered only that he had already given her all his news, and as he must be up early and return on the morrow, he shortly after left her and went to rest.

It was now nearly midnight; the storm had spent itself, but there was neither moon nor star; the heavy darkness seemed to lie upon

the earth like a weight. Sieglinde could not rest. When she slept the confused images of the past day crowded in bewildering procession through her brain; now she was watching again the combat's fierce struggling forms, but all the fighters wore mummers' masks, so that they seemed only grinning phantoms, and there was no sound in their wrestling: and then the merchant was holding the goblet to her lips, and it seemed a death's head with emeralds for eyes stuck shining in its sockets, but the strange woman came between and wrung her hands and shrieked 'Woe!' and cast back the hood from her face; but where should have been a face there was only darkness, and the horror seized upon Sieglinde so that she started awake in agony. Waking was better than such sleep. Sieglinde struck a light with her flint, and lit her little lamp for some companionship in that horror of darkness. She sat up and listened, thinking of the prisoners in the dungeon in their mummers' garb, of Hermann gasping in his wounds, perhaps near to death, of Sir Eginhard with his stern face. All in the Castle seemed deadly still; nothing moved, only now and then a low gust of wind, the last breath of the storm, rose and moaned round the walls like one that confessed his sins in the dark. As she listened, the silence and the horror seemed to grow yet deeper—palpable things that pressed round her and shut her in like a coffin-lid, as though she had lain there for an age, and might still lie another—alone, cut off—nothing breathing in the world but she, under the spell of that intolerable burden.

As she lay thus, and her lips were all that moved of her in a prayer, the faint glimmering of the lamp fell upon some letters on the wall beside her, which she had herself traced there to put herself in mind that even while she slept she should wake; they were in the Greek character, copied from one of Guido's old books, and signified, 'Behold, the Bridegroom cometh.'

'It is past midnight,' said Sieglinde.

With a strong effort she cast the burden from her and rose, and taking the little lamp in her hand, went out of her chamber. She would go and see if Hermann needed anything, and watch beside him. Perhaps Guido, too, might be still there. Noiselessly she passed along the silent ways like some unquiet spirit of the night; the winding stair led ever downward, till at last she stood before the low door of the room where Hermann was lying.

The door stood open a little way, and a light streamed through from within. At first there was no sound, but then a low groaning. Sieglinde was on the point of entering when she heard the chaplain's voice; then the wounded man moaned again.

'There is no hope for those who have sinned as I have done,' he said.

Sieglinde would have glided away unseen, but it was as though some invisible hand held her there, trembling in the darkness, and bowed her to her knees on the ground.

'Who is that who sighs without?' said the dying man's voice.

'One with wounds in His hands and His feet,' answered Guido's voice. 'One Who waits to have mercy on thee, my son, if thou repent ere it be too late.'

'I have sinned—I have sinned; I repent,' said the dying voice.

Lower, lower Sieglinde's head was bowed upon the ground, where she knelt behind the door. The circlet had fallen from her head, and lay in her hands, and by the dim light she saw that the woman's boding words had come to pass; the crystal was no longer white and transparent, but lay in her hand like a dark drop of blood.

'He taketh away the sins of the world. Wilt thou be baptized?'

Through her weeping, she heard brokenly the calm voice of the priest, and the crystal was drenched with the passion of her tears.

'Hermann, I baptise thee in the Name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost'—and then—'thy sins be forgiven thee . . . O, Christian soul, go forth in peace!' . . . for the spirit of Hermann was passing into the night, and Sieglinde still lay prone with her head in the dust.

(To be continued.)

DEBATABLE GROUND.

DOES Idealism help or hinder daily life? By 'Idealism' is meant, not Imagination, but a high and exacting standard of perfection.

This Debate has not taken exactly the form intended by Chelsea China. All the debaters have pronounced in favour of an Ideal—but it has not occurred to most of them to consider the result of idealising, that is, of setting up a high standard, for anything but duty or religion. Possibly the form of the question required more explanation. But it is possible to idealise the relations of life, the characters of other people, the work we have to do. You can have a high ideal, more or less unattainable by yourself and others, of your dinner, of friendship, the fit of your clothes, or of family affection. You can have in your own mind an ideal standard of what a Sunday scholar or teacher, or a clergyman, ought to be like. Or a parent, a child, a brother, or sister, or a human being generally. Or you may take your dinner or your clothes, your scholars or your friends, and mankind generally as they are, and see what good you can find in them. Professor Dowden speaks of Shakespere's 'reverence for fact,' as excluding a devotion to ideal perfection. Certainly he never gave us a King Arthur. Between the view of life that produced King Arthur or Sir Galahad, and that which produced Hamlet or Henry V., lies a wide and difficult question, on which Chelsea China certainly invites 'further remarks,' thinking that there is much to be said on both sides of it, some of which she would like next month to say if the question is further discussed.

P. L. G., *A Town Mouse*, *Elcaam*, *Rudge*, *Alys*, *Lucciola*, *Spinning Jenny*, all send most interesting papers. *Grey Squirrel* says her view has modified a little since she was young and eager. *Lamda's* paper is given as pointing out some of the dangers. *Muffin Man* strongly in favour. *Paper-Knife* distinguishes between various kinds of Idealisms.

Paper-Knife.—It helps us to do our duty in daily life.

Unreality, captiousness, and mistaken conscientiousness—products of idealism alloyed with vanity and incapacity, with fastidiousness and discontent, and with physical and mental limitations of each nature—these things masquerade as Idealism, otherwise the question could scarcely be debated at all. Verbal idealism, sterile idealism, disproportionate idealism, these are the false kings.

Verbal Idealism. Yet the first may be defended on three grounds.

Some men are to be architects whilst others bear the hod or swing on the steeple; and if, though carrying no bricks (either by deliberate intention or by accidental criticism), the idler suggest the *best possible* by forcible description of the *best ideal*, then the idler has done work. 'La bonne parole est aussi une action,' says a character in one of Tourgenief's novels, devoted to the portrayal of Dimitri Rondine, who is of this kind of idealist. He is a man who alienates friends and is the admired of enemies throughout his life based on antitheses of character; a former friend—sharpest of critics—at length makes a powerful appeal on his behalf, because he is unique in exciting the best thoughts of others at impressionable seasons. And, indeed, our sadness, keenness in perception, is often linked to no potency in action. Perhaps the dreamers also 'stand and wait.'*

Perhaps that accounts a little for the fact that the highest standards are most strictly maintained in theory by those who do least, who seem to be only phrase-makers; but if they could do anything else but talk they might do it as well as talk—it is not real idealism which hinders them from personal service, and their verbal idealism is often a help to others. So long as they *genuinely* believe in themselves the talkers, who disgust some, have a real use in inspiring other people, at least at certain impressionable periods.

Sterile idealism is that almost spurious sense of duty which leads to nothing, making tiresome masters and bad servants, which will do nothing but carp: from which we turn with relief to stupidity that knows no best, and to sloth that will not worry *other people* about a standard which the sterile idealist thinks *they* are hopeless in not attaining. Sometimes, however, this sterile idealism is personal, and that 'way madness lies,' even to suicide, physical or moral. Personal failure in idealism is, however, usually that of disproportionate idealism. Fidgeting over imperfect practice, or shirking sufficient examination of our work done, are equally no parts of steadily carrying out idealism. It is absurd even to attempt to make the possible best of *everything* without regard to time and circumstances: nature—(who puts progress everywhere, and the (comparative) perfect where she can)—soon not only defeats but punishes presumption. The limits of versatility can never be laid down for individual minds, yet (great minds know it if little ones find it hard to believe) there are limits even to the smallest capacities who *rush in* upon all kinds of work and try to do each with all their might, called to it or not. One who does not recognise proportion in perfection is likely to fail, not from the standard being too high, but from the ideal of duty being mistaken.

Dazzled, drowsy, or discontented, then, we do no work, cold-hearted and intolerant we feel no love; we are too weak or too severe; till (I quote from memory unavoidably) it has been said by a man, put

* Dreams do not justify drowsiness; if a dreamer is *conscious* of needing excuse he has none.

down as of the first class of failures: 'Only one man in ten thousand takes life seriously enough, and he is precisely that one who should not take it seriously.'

Yet, fully as we own that to *know* the perfect carries us a little way, and in youth makes us 'fastidious' and 'unpractical,' we still maintain that, generally, we cannot do the perfect without knowing it. Theoretical knowledge often hinders for the moment, but it is cause—and afterwards certainly an effect also—of doing our best. 'Idle folk take most pains; the right way of doing things is the easiest,' etc., is nursery teaching. Apart from these spurious imitations of idealism is there any question that we are all the better for *knowing what to do?*

In its highest sense, to all true idealists in some form or other, idealism is indeed this,—knowing what is right, recognising what is good, having a vision of the very Beauty of Holiness itself.

Is not *that* a help to daily life? Surely it simplifies many a problem, especially if we have 'grace and power faithfully to fulfil the same.'

Lamda.—The question, 'Is it well to have a high and exacting standard of perfection,' has surely been answered by the words, 'Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect.' But this debatable subject is probably intended rather to refer to what I may call secondary ideals, meaning by that those sort of ideals the having or not having of which does not interfere one way or the other with the one great aim of life. And I would say undoubtedly it is most helpful to have a high standard *before oneself.* Are you trying to be a landscape painter? Then you will paint better, and know more of both art and nature, if you make Turner your ideal, study his works, and compare your feeble efforts with his, than if you are content with striving merely to paint as well as some one else in your drawing club. The ideal is unattainable, you say; yes, but they who aim at the stars are sure to shoot high. It is true that I have heard of a foolish lady going about with holes in her gloves, because a heroine of science is said to have done the same; and of a sick woman making herself miserable because she could not look, or say, or be all that some saintly invalid she had read about looked and said and was. She did not know or realise the difference in temperament, circumstances, and temptations which made a special kind of holiness comparatively easy to the one, but well nigh impossible to the other. But these mistakes are prevented by a little common sense. It is when we come to the question, 'Is it well to set up a high ideal for *other people,*' that the real difficulty arises. It is well for girls to have before them a high ideal of manhood. Lovers and husbands are more likely to rise to the best they are capable of if they feel that nothing less is expected of them by their *fiancées* or wives; it is well for mothers to have a high ideal of what their children are to become, and for parish workers to have ideal Sunday-

school Guilds and Clubs before their eyes. But it is *not* well that a girl should lose her respect for the Vicar—perhaps for the clergy altogether—because he smokes, enjoys his nap after dinner, allows his wife a prominent part in the parish, or does something else which would never be thought of by her ideal priest—who is probably unmarried, lives in a clergy house, and is a wise confessor, eloquent preacher, indefatigable worker, an ascetic athlete, and Kyrle Society all in one. Our standards for other people should indeed be high, but they should also, it seems to me, be somewhat general and without much going into detail. It is futile to try and mould everybody to our own pattern. We must take men and women as we find them, and be content to gather here a red rose, here a white, without sighing for blue ones too. And even if we could change people to suit our own ideas, are we quite sure that our notions of what they ought to be are always the best? Do we never make mistakes? Do we never fail to appreciate the beauty of those characters which we do not understand, or which are not sympathetic to us? Wisdom is justified in *all* her children. Would not the world be somewhat monotonous if we *could* make every one conform to our own ideal standard?

Further Remarks on Verbal Truth.

Chelsea China would suggest that such remarks must really be 'further.' That is, they must consist of counter-arguments to some of those already brought forward, and hitherto unanswered, or of statements of a new aspect of the question previously overlooked. Chelsea China thinks that in future instances from Holy Scripture had better not be brought forward as arguments. Of course, *rightly* understood, such an instance would be conclusive; but the explanation is not always on the surface, and quoting the Bible on opposite sides, without space for a full and reverent discussion, would not, she thinks, be suitable to these pages.

As exaggeration can never be any one's 'highest duty,' *Veritas Victrix*'s remarks on it are hardly to the point. But her anecdote in favour of careful accuracy is, 'I have heard it said by those who had lived much in Paris in former days, that an Englishwoman's word was then considered absolutely true, and an appeal to her "*Foi d'une Anglaise?*" settled the matter.'

N. S. W., *Fantail*, and *Beacon* record their votes in favour of absolute verbal truthfulness with no reservation. *G. T.* gives instances of lawful 'half-truths.'

X. Y. Z. makes a helpful suggestion.

Great-grandmother is strong for verbal truth at any cost, and her views on 'half-truths' may be set against those of *Happiness*, who 'feels strongly' on the other side.

Great-grandmother.—It seems presumptuous to condemn the half-

truths to which such good men are said to have resorted; but I cannot see why they should not be viewed as much in the light of temptations as positive falsehoods, nor why we should not believe as much in the one case as in the other that they are so, but with a way of escape (in life or death), and that, as *Spermologos* says, 'the duty is (always) to trust in God and let Him find it.' Surely there is little to choose between a 'half-truth' and a direct lie; and I cannot help believing that where good men have had recourse to the former they must often have repented it afterwards. I would rather not believe the story of S. Athanasius; but if it is indisputable, I think he *must* have looked back upon such an answer as a failure in courage, and mourned it as only a holy man could.

Happiness.—I cannot help thinking that ingenious equivocation is a double lie, first to those intentionally deceived, secondly to one's own conscience. It requires much moral courage for a naturally truthful, conscientious person to tell a direct lie in cases where it is necessary; but it is infinitely more truthful to oneself. It is painful to hear really good people relate with pride their 'clever answers,' while they would be unsparing in their condemnation of a simple untruth, however urgent may have been the reasons for its use. Another point—many persons have not the wit and presence of mind readily to hit on clever phrases which can be said in one sense and heard in another. It is hard that they should be condemned as untruthful merely because they cannot deceive ingeniously, and are obliged to use a direct verbal untruth or sacrifice their honour. Surely if deceit is unavoidable, as it must occasionally be as long as there are tactless, curious, gossipping folk in the world, it is better to use a direct lie which one's soul owns, recognises, and regrets, than to deceive one's conscience by the notion that it is possible intentionally to deceive one's neighbour and still not deviate from truth. Don't deceive two people where one will do.

X. Y. Z.—I should like to point out to *Muffin Man*, and to those who seem like her to feel that it is not being true to oneself to express courteous sentiments which one does not actually feel; e.g. on being told by a bore that she called to see you when you were out, 'I am sorry I was not at home,' that after all we have each of us *two selves*, a *better and a worse one*, and that we often have to struggle with the roughness of our worse self in order to express the gentleness of our better one. Before we decide that to avoid the phrases of courtesy is to be 'true to ourselves,' we had better make up our mind which self we wish to be true to. To tell the young people of the present day to avoid being insincere and hypocritical in using gentle phrases which they do not feel, seems to me as unnecessary as to enforce Jeremy Taylor's advice not to endeavour to gain applause by ostentatious devotion.

Town Mouse, M. H., Honeysuckle.—Papers on 'Hero worship' received too late.

SUBJECT FOR NOVEMBER.

As a change from metaphysics—Does a London life offer more outlet and give more advantages than a country one?

Answers to be sent to Chelsea China, care of the Publisher, before December 1st.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

History of Rome.

Questions for November.

41. Give some account of the Conspiracy of Catiline.

42. Write a short life of Pompey.

43. What were the acts of Cæsar, from his Quadruple Triumph till his assassination?

44. Describe the Battle of Actium, and the deaths of Antony and Cleopatra.

(*Concluded.*)

Note.—As the Roman History Competition must be closed at the end of this month, owing to unforeseen circumstances, Clio begs all students to send in their answers to these last questions on the 30th of November. Papers posted after that date cannot be accepted. The Prize List will appear, it is hoped, in the February number.

June Class List.

First Class.

Grasshopper	39	White Cat, Woodpecker, Clotho, Charissa, Wylmecote, Popinjay	31
Bluebell	36		
Atropos	35		
Lisle	34		
Vorwärts, Lachesis	33		
Ignavus, Robin, Budgerigar	32	Repullulat, Stanzerl, Sophonisba, Fidelia, Tacitus	30

Second Class.

Tortoise, Edelweiss, Midge	29	Portia, Romola, Lille Fröken, Carlotta	24
Water-wagtail, Emu, Livy	28	Fieldfare, Speranza	23
Horatius	27	Deryn	21
Carlo, Marius, Claudia	25	Mabel, Countess	20

Third Class.

Neæra	18	Lily	13
Daphne	17		

Disqualified. One unsigned.

July Class List.

First Class.

Grasshopper	37	Ignavus, Robin, Wylmcote, Speranza	31
Clotho	34		
Lisle, Atropos	33	Tortoise, White Cat, Fidelia, Water-wagtail, Bluebell	30
Vorwärts, Emu	32		
Lachesis, Stanzerl, Tacitus	31		

Second Class.

Chrysé, Deryn, Repullulat	29	Mollusk, Horatius	24
Livy, Charissa	27	Midge	23
Edelweiss	26	Portia, Countess	22
Sophonisba, Budgerigar, Claudia	25	Fieldfare, Mabel	21
		Marius, Carlotta	20

Third Class.

Portia (Ealing)	19	Lily, Carlo	14
Glaucia	17		

Disqualified. One unsigned.

REMARKS.

21. Marcus Attilius Regulus, a member of the great Attilian gens, was a patrician, though poor, and noted for that 'plain living' which was so much esteemed by the Romans in the best days of the Republic. (Students should remember to give the *prænomen* and *nomen*, as well as the more familiar *cognomen*, when writing the lives of eminent Romans.) He is first heard of as consul in 267 B.C., when he took Brundusium from the Sallentines and Messapians, after the departure of Pyrrhus from Italy. This fact is mentioned by *Water-wagtail*, *Budgerigar*, *Edelweiss*, *Fidelia*, *Ignavus*, and a few others. *Vorwärts:* Xanthippus was a Lacedæmonian, not a Macedonian general. *Stanzerl:* Ovid, not Horace, was the author of the 'Fasti.' *Lily* mistakes the First Punic War for the Second.

22. Hamilcar Barca subdued Spain as far north as the Tagus, Hasdrubal, his son-in-law, as far as the Ebro, and Hannibal as far as the Douro, by the conquest of Salamanca. This gradual advance of the Carthaginian dominion in Spain is clearly explained by *Charissa*. *Lille Fröken:* Saguntum fell after a siege of eight months, not eight years.

23. It is a disputed question whether Hannibal crossed the Alps by the Alpis Cottia (*Mont Genévre*) or the Alpis Graia (*Little St. Bernard*). Livy names the former pass, but the description of Polybius, from whom Livy derived his information, is supposed to

agree better with the latter, which is the regular road between the valleys of the Isere and Aosta. *Tortoise* and *Water-wagtail:* Hannibal could not have lost 'all his elephants but one' on the mountain, since they helped to overcome the Roman cavalry at the Trebbia, as is well shown by *Vorwärts* in a neat plan of the battle. It was after crossing the Apennines early in the following year that he was left with a single survivor of the troop of thirty-seven elephants which he had brought from New Carthage.

24. *Countess* had better not have attempted to give a complete narrative of the Second Punic War, when a brief summary only was asked for. *Fieldfare:* the capture of Saguntum was not one of the events of that war, but its immediate occasion.

25. *Grasshopper*'s 'character of Scipio' is, as usual, extremely well written, but does not quite bring out that chivalrous and romantic generosity, exemplified in his demeanour towards the bride of Allucius, which makes him the very Bayard of antiquity. *Sophonisba, Deryn,* and *Livy* fail to notice his Greek culture, and the taste for literary pursuits to which he alluded when he said that 'he was never less alone than when alone.' *Robin:* Scipio believed himself to be the *subject,* not the *object,* of a divine inspiration. The subject is the person who feels; the object is the person (or thing) that excites feeling in others.

26. *Lisle, Tacitus, Water-wagtail,* and *Stanzerl* explain clearly the peculiar authority of the Roman Censors, as guardians of morals (not of religion, which was regulated by the Pontiffs). The connexion between this duty of inquisition and their other office of financial ministers, lay, of course, in the tendency of vice and extravagance to diminish property.

27. *Bluebell, Water-wagtail, Portia, Midge:* '*Saturnian* verse' has nothing whatever to do with the Roman *Satura* (satira), which means a 'medley.' It was so called simply because it was the most ancient kind of poetry, supposed to have originated 'in Saturn's reign,' i.e. in the golden age of Italy. The Saturnian metre consisted of three iambic feet and an odd syllable, determined by accent instead of quantity, as—

'Mortáles ímmortáles
Flerént divé Caménæ,' etc.

Many of the mediæval Latin hymns are written in Saturnian metre; for instance, the hymn 'Quisquis valet' of the 15th century—

'Huic cætus Ángelórum,
Huic túrba Cónfessórum,' etc.

28. *Carlo:* the treaty of Philip V. of Macedon, which led to the First Macedonian War, was not made with the Romans, but with Hannibal.

Notices to Correspondents.

Ewing Hill.—Sir Jasper Merrifield was Captain Merrifield's youngest brother.

Reader.—The advertisements at the beginning of the 'Monthly Packet' do not come through the Editor, who knows nothing about them.

A. B.—'All Saints' Day' declined with thanks.

Mary will find the Hymn of the Vaudois Mountaineers, commencing with the words 'For the strength of our hills we bless Thee,' in any edition of Mrs. Hemans's Poems.

A. B. B.

E. E. B.—St. Eloy, or Eligius, was a goldsmith in the time of the Fainéant Kings of France. He made a throne for Dagobert, but afterwards became a Bishop. Legend declares that when shoeing a horse, he took off its leg, put on the shoe, and returned the limb to its place. It is not likely that English churches should be dedicated to him.

F. A. E.—You had better apply to the Secretary of the Zenana Mission, Miss Swainson.

Quotation wanted—

'Charge not thyself with the weight of a year,
Child of the Master, faithful and dear;
Choose not thy cross for the coming week,
For that is more than He bids thee seek;
Bend not thine arms for to-morrow's load,
Thou may'st leave that to thy gracious God;
"Daily" only, He saith to thee,
"Take up thy cross and follow Me."'

O. M.

NORTH AND SOUTH OF THE BORDER.

CHURCH WORK AND WORKERS.

Edinboro', Carlisle, and elsewhere.

'Work while it is day.'

PROSPECTUS.

It is proposed to start a Monthly Magazine, as a record of Church Work, with special reference to Edinboro' and Carlisle, and to those localities nearest the Border, and yet open to any other neighbourhood under certain conditions.

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Friends of Church Work in the North, and especially in Edinboro' and Carlisle, are earnestly asked to become subscribers.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,

You are so kind as to ask me to explain the object of the proposed Magazine, the prospectus of which accompanies this notice. The Title, I think, fairly expresses its specific object; and so far as I know, we have not at present any magazine which takes its standing ground as a recorder of Church Work, with special reference to the Church on *both* sides of the Border. All contributions concerning Church Work will be welcomed from whatever quarter; and we hope that this united record will be deeply interesting and beneficial, enlarging and widening our mutual sympathies, and rendering the 'Border,' no longer a *Barrier*, but a highway over which the Church of Christ passes to and fro on her great mission. conquering and to conquer. Hoping that many of your readers will become our subscribers. Believe me, dear Mr. Editor, again thanking you for your kind indulgence, to be, very faithfully yours,

THE SECRETARY.

Address—

THE SECRETARY,
'North and South of the Border,'
7, Johnston Terrace, Edinburgh.

ST. JAMES WITH POCKTHORPE, NORWICH.

The Sisters have at last secured a suitable House, in which to carry on the Crêche, Mothers' Meetings, and other Parochial work.

This House, situated in Priory Yard, Cowgate Street, was formerly a Nonconformist Chapel, but had of late years been used as a warehouse and workshop. It has required considerable alterations, in order to make it suitable for the purposes of an ordinary dwelling-house. These expenses have been shared between the owner and the Sisters, as tenants. The tenants' share of this outlay, together with the necessary fittings and furniture, will amount to about £170,

besides which there is an Annual Rent of £25 to be secured, exclusive of rates and taxes.

Donations towards either of these objects are earnestly solicited.

The following sums have already been received :—

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
The Dean of Norwich . . .	5	0	0	The Rev. S. France . . .	2	2	0
Donations by Cathedral Offertory	5	0	0	J. Christie, Esq.	10	0	0
Messrs. Steward and Patteson	20	0	0	Mrs. D. Steward, for crêche cots	3	2	0
W. Birkbeck, Esq.	10	0	0	Mrs. Goulburn „	1	10	0
J. Gurney, Esq.	10	0	0	Miss L. Hansell „		11	0
Geof. Buxton, Esq., and Mrs. Buxton	10	0	0	A Friend (Rent)	5	5	0
				S. S. Buxton, Esq.	5	0	0
				Alex. Booth, Esq. (Rent) . .	5	0	0

A gentleman offers £40 anonymously, on condition that a great effort is being made to realise the rest of the money as speedily as possible.

Received since the above:—

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
Mrs. Dawson Paul	1	1	0	The Hon. Marchioness of Lothian	2	0	0
The Rev. F. Hildyard. . .	1	0	0	Mrs. Cooch (Rent)	2	2	0
Mrs. H. Ballard	1	0	0	Mrs. Browne	2	2	0
Mrs. Alex. Chamberlin . .	1	0	0				

Donations may be sent to the Sister-in-Charge, Palace Plain, Norwich; or be paid into the 'All Hallows' Mission Account,' at Messrs. Gurney's Bank, Norwich.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE 'MONTHLY PACKET.'

I am anxious to know whether there is any means by which two sisters (at present tied by other duties) might study in private any one of the vernacular languages of India, with a view to the possibility of offering themselves, at some future date, for work in one of the Zenana Missions, should the way be opened for one, or both, so to do.

Also, *which* of the many languages of the country would be the most advisable and practicable to take up? I should feel greatly obliged to you, or any of your readers, if you or they would kindly answer these questions in the 'Monthly Packet.' With many apologies for thus troubling you,

I remain, dear Madam,

Yours faithfully,

Y. A. N.

The Monthly Packet.

DECEMBER, 1887.

BEECHCROFT AT ROCKSTONE.

BY THE EDITOR.

CHAPTER XII.

TRANSFORMATIONS.

'WELL, now for the second stage of our guardianship!' said Aunt Ada, as the two sisters sat over the fire after Valetta had gone to bed. 'Fergus comes back to-morrow, and Gillian—when?'

'She does not seem quite certain, for there is to be a day or two at Brompton with this delightful Geraldine, so that she may see her grandmother—also Mr. Clement Underwood's church, and the "Merchant of Venice," an odd mixture of ecclesiastics and dissipations.'

'I wonder whether she will be set up by it.'

'So do I! They are all remarkably good people; but then good people *do* sometimes spoil the most of all, for they are too unselfish to snub. And on the other hand, seeing the world sometimes has the wholesome effect of making one feel small.'

'My dear Jenny!'

'Oh! I did not mean you, who are never easily effaced; but I was thinking of youthful bumptiousness, fostered by country life and elder sistership.'

'Certainly, though Valetta is really much improved, Gillian has not been as pleasant as I expected, especially during the latter part of the time.'

'Query, was it her fault or mine, or the worry of the examination, or all three?'

'Perhaps you did superintend a little too much at first. More than modern independance was prepared for, though I should not have expected recalcitration in a young Lily; but I think there was more ruffling of temper and more reserve than I can quite understand.'

'It has not been a success. As dear old Lily would have said, "My dream has vanished," of a friend in the younger generation, and now

it remains to do the best I can for her in the few weeks that are left, before we have her dear mother again.'

'At any rate, you have no cause to be troubled about the other two. Valetta is really the better for her experience, and you have always got on well with the boy.'

Fergus was the first of the travellers to appear at Rockstone. Miss Mohun, who went to meet him at the station, beheld a small figure lustily pulling at a great canvas bag, which came bumping down the step, assisted by a shove from the other passengers, and threatening for a moment to pull him down between platform and carriages.

'Fergus, Fergus, what have you got there? Give it to me. How heavy.'

'It's a few of my mineralogical specimens,' replied Fergus. 'Harry wouldn't let me put any more into my portmanteau—but the peacock and the dendrum are there.'

Already, without special regard to peacock or dendrum, whatever that article might be, Miss Mohun was claiming the little old military portmaneau with a great M, and 110th painted on it, that held Fergus's garments.

He would scarcely endure to deposit the precious bag in the omnibus, and as he walked home his talk was all of tertiary formations, and coal measures and limestones, as he extracted a hammer from his pocket, and looked perilously disposed to use it on the vein of crystals in a great pink stone in a garden wall. His aunt was obliged to begin by insisting that the walls should be safe from geological investigations.

'But it is such waste, Aunt Jane. Only think of building up such beautiful specimens in a stupid old wall.'

Aunt Jane did not debate the question of waste, but assured him that equally precious specimens could be honestly come by; while she felt renewed amusement and pleasure at anything so like the brother Maurice of thirty odd years ago being beside her.

It made her endure the contents of the bag being turned out like a miniature rockery for her inspection on the floor of the glazed verandah outside the drawing-room, and also try to pacify Mrs. Mount's indignation at finding the more valuable specimens, or as she called them, 'nasty stones' and bits of dirty coal, within his socks.

Much more information as to mines, coal or copper, was to be gained from him than as to Cousin David, or Harry, or Jasper, who had spent the last ten days of his holidays at Coalham, which had procured for Fergus the felicity of a second underground expedition. It was left to his maturer judgment and the next move to decide how many of his specimens were absolutely worthless, it was only stipulated that he and Valetta should carry them, all and sundry, up to the lumber-room, and there arrange them as he chose. Aunt

Jane routing out for him a very dull little manual of mineralogy, and likewise a book of Maria Hack's, long since out of print, but wherein 'Harry Beaufoy' is instructed in the chief outlines of geology in a manner only perhaps inferior to that of 'Madame How and Lady Why,' which she reserved for a birthday present. Meantime Rockstone and its quarries were almost as excellent a field of research as the mines of Coalham, and in a different line.

'How much nicer it is to be a boy than a girl,' sighed Valetta, as she beheld her junior marching off with all the dignity of hammer and knapsack to look up Alexis White, and obtain access to the heaps of rubbish, which in his eyes held as infinite possibilities, as the diamond fields of Kimberley. And Alexis was only delighted to bestow on him any space of daylight when both were free from school or from work, and kept a look-out for the treasures he desired. Of course, out of gratitude to his parents—or was it out of gratitude to his sister—perhaps Fergus could have told, if he had paid the slightest attention to such a trifle, how anxiously Alexis enquired when Miss Gillian was expected to return. Moreover, he might have told that his other model, Stebbing, pronounced old Dick White a beast and a screw, with whom his brother Frank was not going to stop.

Gillian came back a fortnight later, having been kept at Rowthorpe, together with Mrs. Grinstead, for a family festival over the double marriage in Ceylon, after which she spent a few days in London, so as to see her grandmother, Mrs. Merrifield, who was too infirm for an actual visit to be welcome, since her attendant grandchild, Bessie Merrifield, was so entirely occupied with her as to have no time to bestow upon a guest of more than an hour or two. Gillian was met at the station by her aunt, and when all her belongings had been duly extracted, proving a good deal larger in bulk than when she had left Rockstone, and both were seated in the fly to drive home through a dismal February Fill-dyke day, the first words that were spoken were—

'Aunt Jane, I ought to tell you something.'

Hastily revolving conjectures as to the subject of the coming confession, Miss Mohun put herself at her niece's service.

'Aunt Jane, I know I ought to have told you how much I was seeing of the Whites last autumn.'

'Indeed, I know you wished to do what you could for them.'

'Yes,' said Gillian, finding it easier than she expected. 'You know Alexis wants very much to be prepared for Holy Orders, and he could not get on by himself, so I have been running down to Kalliope's office after reading to Lily Giles, to look over his Greek exercises.'

'Meeting him?'

'Only sometimes. But Kally did not like it. She said you ought to know, and that was the reason she would not come into the G. F. S. She is so good and honourable, Aunt Jane.'

'I am sure she is a very excellent girl,' said Aunt Jane warmly. 'But certainly it would have been better to have these lessons in our house. Does your mother know?'

'Yes,' said Gillian; 'I wrote to her all I was doing, and how I have been talking to Kally on Sunday afternoons through the rails of Mr. White's garden. I thought she could telegraph if she did not approve; but she does not seem to have noticed it in my letters, only saying something I could not make out, about "if you approved."'

'And is that the reason you have told me?'

'Partly; but I got the letter before the holidays. I think it has worked itself up, Aunt Jane, into a sense that it was not the thing. There was Kally, and there was poor Valetta's mess, and her justifying herself by saying I did more for the Whites than you knew, and altogether, I grew sorry I had begun it, for I was sure it was not acting honestly towards you, Aunt Jane, and I hope you will forgive me.'

Miss Mohun put her arm round the girl and kissed her heartily.

'My dear Gill, I am glad you have told me! I dare say I seemed to worry you, and that you felt as if you were watched; I will do my very best to help you, if you have got into a scrape. I only want to ask you not to do anything more till I can see Kally, and settle with her the most suitable way of helping the youth.'

'But do you think there is a scrape, aunt; I never thought of that, if you forgave me.'

'My dear, I see you did not; and that you told me because you are my Lily's daughter, and have her honest heart. I do not *know* that there is anything amiss, but I am afraid young ladies can't do—well, impulsive things without a few vexations in consequence. Don't be so dismayed, I don't know of anything, and I cannot tell you how glad I am of your having spoken out in this way.'

'I feel as if a load were off my back!' said Gillian.

And a bar between her and her aunt seemed to have vanished, as they drove up the now familiar slope, and under the leafless copper beeches. Blood is thicker than water, and what five months ago had seemed to be exile, had become the first step to home, if not home itself, for now, like Valetta, she welcomed the sound of her mother's voice in her aunt's. And there were Valetta and Fergus rushing out, almost under the wheels to fly at her, and Aunt Ada's soft embraces in the hall.

The first voice that came out of the *mêlée* was Valetta's. 'Gill is grown quite a lady!'

'How much improved,' exclaimed Aunt Ada.

'The Bachfisch has swum into the river,' was Aunt Jane's comment.

'She'll never be good for anything jolly—no scrambling!' grumbled Fergus.

'Now Fergus! didn't Kitty Somerville and I scramble when we found the gate locked and thought it was the spiteful stag, and that he was going to run at us.'

'I'm afraid that was rather on compulsion, Gill.'

'It wasn't the spiteful stag after all, but we had such a long way to come home, and got over the park wall at last by the help of the limb of a tree. We had been taking a bit of wedding-cake to Frank Somerville's old nurse, and Kitty told her I was her maiden aunt, and we had such fun—her uncle's wife's sister, you know.'

'We sent a great piece of our wedding-cake to the Whites,' put in Valetta. 'Fergus and I took it on Saturday afternoon, but nobody was at home, but Mrs. White, and she is fatter than ever.'

'I say, Gill, which is the best formation, Vale Leston or Rowthorpe?'

'Oh! nobody is equal to Geraldine; but Kitty is a dear thing.'

'I didn't mean that stuff, but which had the best strata and specimens.'

'Geological he means—not of society,' interposed Aunt Jane.

'Oh! yes. Harry said he had gone geology mad, and I really did get you a bit of something at Vale Leston, Fergus, that Mr. Harewood said was worth having. Was it an encrinite? I know it was a stone-lily——'

'An encrinite? Oh! scrumptious.'

Then ensued such an unpacking as only falls to the lot of home-comers from London, within the later precincts of Christmas, gifts of marvellous contrivance and novelty, as well as cheapness, for all and sundry, those reserved for others almost as charming to the beholders as those which fell to their own lot. The box, divided into compartments, transported Fergus as much as the encrinite; Valetta had a photograph-book, and, more diffidently, Gillian presented Aunt Ada with a graceful little statuette in Parian, and Aunt Jane with the last novelty in baskets. There were appropriate keepsakes for the maids, and likewise for Kalliope and Maura. Aunt Jane was glad to see that discretion had prevailed so as to confine these gifts to the female part of the White family. There were other precious articles in reserve for the absent; and the display of Gillian's own garments was not without interest, as she had been to her first ball, under the chaperonage of Lady Somerville, and Mrs. Grinstead had made her white tarletan available by painting it and its ribbons with exquisite blue nemophilas, too lovely for anything so fleeting.

Mrs. Grinstead and her maid had taken charge of the damsel's toilette at Rowthorpe, had perhaps touched up her dresses, and had certainly taught her how to put them on, and how to manage her hair, so that though it had not broken out into fringes or tousles, as if it were desirable to imitate savages 'with foreheads marvellous low,' the effect was greatly improved. The young brown-skinned, dark-eyed face, and rather tall figure were the same, even the clothes

the very same chosen under her Aunt Ada's superintendance, but there was an indescribable change, not so much that of fashion as of distinction, and something of the same inward growth might be gathered from her conversation.

All the evening there was a delightful outpouring. Gillian had been extremely happy, and considerably reconciled to her sisters' marriages; but she had been away from home and kin long enough to make her feel her nearness to her aunts, and to appreciate the pleasure of describing her enjoyment without restraint, and of being with those whose personal family interests were her own, not only sympathetic like her dear Geraldine's. They were ready for any amount of description, though on the whole, Miss Mohun preferred to hear of the Vale Leston charities and Church details, and Miss Adeline of the Rowthorpe grandees and gaieties, after the children had supped full of the diversions of their own kind at both places, and the deeply interesting political scraps, and descriptions of great men had been given.

It had been, said Aunt Jane, a bit of education. Gillian had indeed spent her life with thoughtful, cultivated, and superior people; but the circumstances of her family had confined her to a schoolroom sort of existence ever since she had reached appreciative years, retarding, though not perhaps injuring, her development; nor did Rockquay Society afford much that was elevating, beyond the Bureau de Charité that Beechcroft Cottage had become. Details were so much in hand that breadth of principle might be obscured.

At Vale Leston, however, there was a strong ecclesiastical atmosphere, but while practical parish detail was thoroughly kept up, there was a wider outlook, and constant conversation and discussion among superior men, such as the Harewood brothers, Lancelot Underwood, Mr. Grinstead, and Dr. May, on the great principles and issues of Church and State matters, religion, and morals, together with matters of art, music, and literature opening new vistas to her; and which she could afterwards go over with Mrs. Grinstead and Emily and Anna Vanderkist with enthusiasm and comprehension. It was something different from grumbling over the number of candles at St. Kenelm's, or the defective washing of the St. Andrew's surplices.

At Rowthorpe, she had seen and heard people with great historic names, champions in the actual battle. There had been a constant coming and going of guests during her three weeks' visit, political meetings, entertainments to high and low, the opening of a public institute in the next town, the exhibition of tableaux in which she had an important share, parties in the evenings, and her first ball. The length of her visit and her connection with the family had made her share the part of hostess with Lady Constance and Lady Katharine Somerville, and she had been closely associated with their intimates, the daughters of these men of great names. Of course

there had been plenty of girlish chatter and merry trifling, perhaps some sharp satirical criticism, and the revelations she had heard had been a good deal of the domestic comedy of political and aristocratic life; but throughout there had been a view of conscientious goodness, for the young girls who gave a tone to the rest had been carefully brought up, and were earnest and right minded, accepting representation, gaiety, and hospitality as part of the duty of their position, often involving self-denial, though there was likewise plenty of enjoyment.

Such glimpses of life had taught Gillian more than she yet realised. As has been seen, the atmosphere of Vale Leston had deepened her spiritual life, and the sermons had touched her heart to the quick, and caused self-examination, which had revealed to her the secret of her dissatisfaction with herself, and her perception was the clearer through her intercourse on entirely equal terms with persons of a high tone of refinement.

The immediate fret of sense of supervision and opposition being removed, she had seen things more justly, and a distaste had grown on her for stolen expeditions to the office, and for the corrections of her pupil's exercises. She recoiled from the idea that this was the consequence either of having swell friends, or of getting out of her depth in her instructions, but reluctance recurred, while advance in knowledge of the world made her aware that Alexis White, after hours, in his sister's office, might justly be regarded by her mother and aunts as an undesirable scholar for her, and that his sister's remonstrances ought not to have been scouted. She had done the thing in her simplicity, but it was through her own wilful secretiveness that her ignorance had not been guarded.

Thus she had, as a matter of truth, conscience, and repentance, made the confession which had been so kindly received as to warm her heart with gratitude to her aunt, and she awoke the next morning to feel freer, happier, and more at home than she had ever yet done at Rockstone.

When the morning letters were opened, they contained the startling news that Mysie might be expected that very evening, with Fly, the governess, and Lady Rotherwood, at least that was the order of precedence in which the party represented itself to the minds of the young Merrifields. Primrose had caught a fresh cold, and her uncle and aunt would not part with her till her mother's return, but the infection was over with the other two, and sea air was recommended as soon as possible for Lady Phyllis; so as the wing of the hotel, which was almost a mansion in itself, had been already engaged, the journey was to be made at once, and the arrival would take place in the afternoon. The tidings were most raptuously received, Valetta jumped on and off all the chairs in the room unchidden, while Fergus shouted, 'Hurrah, for Mysie and Fly,' and Gillian's heart felt free to leap.

This made it a very busy day, since Lady Rotherwood had begged to have some commissions executed for her beforehand, small in themselves, but with a scrupulously thorough person occupying all the time left from other needful engagements, so that there was no chance of the promised conversation with Kalliope, nor did Gillian trouble herself much about it in her eagerness, and hardly heard Fergus announce that Frank Stebbing had come home, and the old boss was coming, 'bad luck to him.'

All the three young people were greatly disappointed that their aunts would not consent to their being on the platform nor in front of the hotel, nor even in what its mistress termed the reception-room, to meet the travellers.

'There was nothing Lady Rotherwood would dislike more than a rush of you all,' said Aunt Adeline, and they had to submit, though Valetta nearly cried when she was dragged in from demonstratively watching at the gate in a Scotch mist.

However, in about a quarter of an hour, there was a ring at the door, and in another moment Mysie and Gillian were hugging one another, Valetta hanging round Mysie's neck, Fergus pulling down her arm. The four creatures seemed all wreathed into one like fabulous snakes for some seconds, and when they unfolded enough for Mysie to recollect and kiss her aunts, there certainly was a taller, better equipped figure, but just the same round, good-humoured countenance, and the first thing, beyond happy ejaculations, that she was heard in a dutiful voice to say, was, 'Miss Elbury brought me to the door. I may stay as long as my aunts like to have me this evening, if you will be so kind as to send some one to see me back.'

Great was the jubilation, and many the enquiries after Primrose, who had once been nearly well, but had fallen back again, and Fly, who—Mysie said, was quite well and as comical as ever when she was well, but got tired directly. She had set out in high spirits, but had been dreadfully weary all the latter part of the journey, and was to go to bed at once. She still coughed, but Mysie was bent on disproving Nurse Halfpenny's assurance that the recovery would not be complete till May, nor was there any doubt of her own air of perfect health.

It was an evening of felicitous chatter, of showing off Christmas cards, of exchanging of news, of building of schemes, the most prominent being that Valetta should be in the constant companionship of Mysie and Fly until her own schoolroom should be reestablished. This had been proposed by Lord Rotherwood, and was what the aunts would have found convenient, but apparently this had been settled by Lord Rotherwood and the two little girls, but Lady Rotherwood had not said anything about it, and quoth Mysie, 'Somehow things don't happen till Lady Rotherwood settles them, and then they always do.'

'And shall I like Miss Elbury?' asked Valetta.

'Yes, if—if you take pains,' said Mysie; 'but you mustn't bother her with questions in the middle of a lesson, or she tells you not to chatter. She likes to have them all kept for the end; and then, if they aren't foolish, she will take lots of trouble.'

'Oh, I hate that!' said Valetta. 'I shouldn't remember them; and I like to have done with it. Then she is not like Miss Vincent?'

'Oh, no! She couldn't be dear Miss Vincent; but, indeed, she is very kind and nice.'

'How did you get on altogether, Mysie? Wasn't it horrid?' asked Gillian.

'I was afraid it was going to be horrid,' said Mysie. 'You see it wasn't like going in holiday time as it was before. We had to be almost always in the schoolroom; and there were lots of lessons—more for me than Fly.'

'Just like a horrid old governess, to slake her thirst on you,' put in Fergus, and though his aunts shook their heads at him, they did not correct him.

'And one had to sit bolt upright all the time, and never twist one's ankles,' continued Mysie; 'and not speak except French and German—good, mind! It wouldn't do to say, "La Jambe du table est sur mon exercise?"'

'Oh, oh! No wonder Fly got ill!'

'Fly didn't mind one bit. French and German come as naturally to her as the days of the week; and they really begin to come to me in the morning now when I see Miss Elbury.'

'But have you to go on all day?' asked Valetta disconsolately.

'Oh, no! Not after one o'clock.'

'And you didn't say that mamma thinks it only leads to slovenly bad grammar?' said Gillian.

'That would have been impertinent,' said Mysie; 'and no one would have minded either.'

'Did you never play?'

'We might play after our walk—and after tea, but it had to be quiet play—not real good games, even before Fly was ill—at least we did have some real games when Primrose came over, or when Cousin Rotherwood had us down in his study or in the hall; but Fly got tired, and knocked up very soon even then. Miss Elbury wanted us always to play battledore and shuttlecock, or *Les Graces*, if we couldn't go out.'

'Horrid woman!' said Valetta.

'No, she isn't horrid,' said Mysie stoutly; 'I only fancied her so, when she used to say, "*Vos coudes, mademoiselle*," or "*Redressez-vous*," and when she would not let us whisper; but really and truly she was very, very kind, and I came to like her very much and see she was not cross—only thought it right.'

'And *redressez-vous* has been useful, Mysie,' said Aunt Ada; 'you are as much improved as Gillian.'

'I thought it would be dreadful,' continued Mysie, 'when the grown-ups went out on a round of visits, and we had no drawing-room, and no Cousin Rotherwood; but Cousin Florence came every day, and once she had us to dinner, and that *was* nice; and once she took us to Beechcroft to see Primrose, and if it was not fine enough for Fly to go out, she came for me, and I went to her cottages with her. Oh, I did like that! And when the whooping-cough came, you can't think how very kind she was, and Miss Elbury too. They both seemed only to think how to make me happy, though I didn't feel ill a bit, except when I whooped; but they seemed so sorry for me, and so pleased that I didn't make more fuss. I couldn't, you know, when poor Fly was so ill. And when she grew better, we were all so glad, that somehow it made us all like a sort of a kind of a home together, though it could not be that.'

Mysie's English had scarcely improved, whatever her French had done; but Gillian gathered that she had had far more grievances to overcome, and had met them in a very different spirit from herself.

As to the schoolroom arrangements, which would have been so convenient to the aunts, it was evident that the matter had not yet been decisively settled, though the children took it for granted. It was pretty to see how Mysie was almost devoured by Fergus and Valetta, hanging on either side of her as she sat, and Gillian as near as they would allow, while the four tongues went on unceasingly.

It was only horrid, Valetta said, that Mysie should sleep in a different house; but almost as much of her company was vouchsafed on the ensuing day, Sunday, for Miss Elbury had relations at Rockquay, and was released for the entire day; and Fly was still so tired in the morning that she was not allowed to get up early in the day.

Her mother, however, came in to go to church with Adeline Mohun, and Gillian, who had heard so much of the great Marchioness, was surprised to see a small slight woman, not handsome, and worn-looking about the eyes. At the first glance she was plainly dressed; but the eye of a connoisseur like Aunt Ada could detect the exquisiteness of the material and the taste, and the slow soft tone of her voice; and every gesture and phrase showed that she had all her life been in the habit of condescending—in fact, thought Gillian, revolving her recent experience, though Lady Liddesdale and all her set are taller, finer-looking people, they are not one bit so grand—no, not that—but so unapproachable, as I am sure she is. She is gracious, while they are just good-natured!

Aunt Ada was evidently pleased with the graciousness, and highly delighted to have to take this distinguished personage to church. Mysie was with her sisters, Valetta was extremely anxious to take her to the Sunday drawing-room class, whether for the sake of showing her to Mrs. Hablot, or Mrs. Hablot to her, did not appear.

Gillian was glad to be asked to sit with Fly in the meantime. It

was a sufficient reason for not repairing to the garden, and she hoped that Kalliope was unaware of her return, little knowing of the replies by which Fergus repaid Alexis for his assistance in mineral hunting. She had no desire to transgress Miss Mohun's desire that no further intercourse should take place till she herself had spoken with Kalliope.

She found little Phyllis Devereux a great deal taller and thinner than the droll childish being who had been so amusing two years before at Silverfold; but eagerly throwing herself into her arms with the same affectionate delight. All the table was spread with pretty books and outlined illuminations waiting to be painted, and some really beautiful illustrated Sunday books, but as Gillian touched the first, Fly cried out, 'Oh! don't. I am so tired of all those things! And this is such a stupid window. I thought at least I should see the people going to church, and this looks at nothing but the old sea and a tiresome garden.'

'That is thought a special advantage,' said Gillian, smiling.

'Then I wish some one had it who liked it!'

'You would not be so near us.'

'No, and that is nice, and very nice for Mysie. How are all the dear beasts at Silverfold—Begum, and all?'

'I am afraid I do not know more about them than Mysie does. Aunt Jane heard this morning that she must go down there to-morrow to meet the health-man and see what he says; but she won't take any of us because of the diphtheria and the scarlet fever being about.'

'Oh dear, how horrid those catching things are! I've not seen Ivinghoe all this winter! Ah! but they are good sometimes! If it had not been for the measles, I should never have had that most delicious time at Silverfold, nor known Mysie. Now, please tell me all about where you have been, and what you have been doing?'

Fly knew some of the younger party that Gillian had met at Rowthorpe; but she was more interested in the revels at Vale Leston, and required a precise description of the theatricals, or still better, of the rehearsals. Never was there a more appreciative audience, of how it all began, from Kit Harewood, the young sailor, having sent home a lion's skin from Africa, which had already served for tableaux of Androcles and of Una—how the boy element had insisted on fun, and the child element on fairies, and how Mrs. William Harewood had suggested Midsummer Night's Dream as the only combination of the three essentials, lion, fun, and fairy, and pronounced that education had progressed far enough for the representation to be 'understanded of the people,' at least by the 6th and 7th standards. On the whole, however, comprehension seemed to have been bounded by intense admiration of the little girl fairies, whom the old women appeared to have taken for angels, for one had declared that to hear little Miss Cherry and Miss Katie singing their hymns

like the angels they was, was just like Heaven. She must have had an odd notion of 'Spotted snakes with double tongues.' Moreover, effect was added to the said hymns by Uncle Lance behind the scenes.

Then there was the account of how it had been at first intended that Oberon should be represented by little Sir Adrian, with his Bexley cousin, Pearl Underwood, for his Titania; but though she was fairy enough for anything, he turned out so stolid, and uttered, 'Well met by moonlight, proud Titania,' the only lines he ever learnt, exactly like a lesson, besides crying whenever asked to study his part, that the attempt had to be given up, and the Fairy sovereigns had to be of large size, Mr. Grinstead pronouncing that probably this was intended by Shakspeare, as Titania was a name of Diana, and he combined Grecian nymphs with English fairies. So Gerald Underwood had to combine the part of Peter Quince (including Thisbe) with that of Oberon, and the queen was offered to Gillian.

'But I had learnt Hermia,' she said, 'and I saw it was politeness, so I wouldn't, and Anna Vanderkist is ever so much prettier, besides being used to acting with Gerald. She did look perfectly lovely, asleep on the moss in the scene Mrs. Grinstead painted and devised for her! There was——'

'Oh! not only the prettiness, I don't care for that. One gets enough of the artistic, but the fun—the dear fun.'

'There was fun enough, I am sure,' said Gillian. 'Puck was Felix—Pearl's brother, you know—eleven years old, so clever, and an awful imp—and he was Moon besides; but the worst of it was that his dog—it was a funny rough terrier at the Vicarage—was so furious at the lion, when Adrian was roaring under the skin that nobody could hear, and Adrian got frightened, as well he might, and crept out from under it, screaming, and there fell the lion, collapsing flat in the middle of the place. Even Theseus—Major Harewood, you know, who had tried to be as grave as a judge, and so polite to the actors—could not stand that, interpolation as he called it, of "the man in the moon—not to say the dog," came down too soon—— Why, Fly——'

For Fly was in such a paroxysm of laughter, as to end in a violent fit of coughing, and to bring Lady Rotherwood in, vexed and anxious.

'Oh, mother! it was only—it was only the lion's skin——' and off went Fly, laughing and coughing again.

'I was telling her about the acting of Midsummer Night's Dream at Vale Leston,' explained Gillian.

'I should not have thought that a suitable subject for the day,' said the Marchioness gravely, and Fly's endeavour to say it was her fault for asking about it, was silenced by choking, and Gillian found herself courteously dismissed in polite disgrace, and as she felt, not entirely without justice.

It was a great disappointment that Aunt Jane did not think it

well to take any of the young people to their home with her. As she said, she did not believe that they would catch anything; but it was better to be on the safe side, and she fully expected that they would spend most of the day with Mysie and Fly.

'I wish I could go and talk to Kalliope, my dear,' she said to Gillian; 'but I am afraid it must wait another day.'

'Oh, never mind,' said Gillian, as they bade each other good-night at their doors; 'they don't know that I am come home, so they will not expect me.'

(To be continued.)

DAGMAR.

BY HELEN SHIPTON, AUTHOR OF 'CAIRNFROTH,' ETC.

CHAPTER VI.

THE HOUSE WARMING.

'Hush! hush!—oh, hush! for the yellow rose is—Sorrow,
And the nightshade flower is—Silence,
And the cypress bough is—Death.'

TIME passed swiftly on, and brought with it a break up of the party at the Hall. Raymond could no longer neglect the very little business with which he pretended to occupy himself, and went reluctantly back to town, not having made as much progress in his wooing as he could have wished. It was not only that Dagmar's feelings were hard to touch, but his own needed so much arousing. He resolved to try what absence would do, and departed, promising to come back at Christmas.

Agnes Morrison went to her aunt at Brighton for the winter, and Maurice Claughton, perhaps finding a stationary existence somewhat dull, went off to visit some of the English lions, also promising to come back in December.

The family at the Hall were genuinely sorry to lose him. He had become more one of themselves than they had at first imagined possible, and no one who saw his frankly affectionate manner towards Mr. and Mrs. Tyndal would have believed in the shy stiffness which he had shown on his first arrival. Nevertheless the shyness was there, though much in obeyance, and every now and then a chance word or allusion would freeze him up for a time into incomprehensible gloom and stateliness.

But as a rule he was excellent company, and good friends, in a fitful sort of fashion, with Dagmar, and always admired, followed, and looked up to, by Dick.

The repairs at the Court went on but slowly, and were being well and thoroughly done. Some eccentricities the Squire and his ex-ward managed to commit between them, for Mr. Tyndal was apt to give his opinions at random, and Maurice was almost absurdly docile—up to a certain point.

But he would never consent to alter a plan once made, or counter-order what he had once ordered. He would hasten to carry out a suggestion of his old friend's as if he had no will of his own; but the thing once begun or even ordered, was as the laws of the Medes and Persians, and altered not.

Remonstrance then was wasted upon Maurice. He never argued or got angry, but he never wavered; and what was done could not be undone. It seemed that he *could* not change his mind.

Poor Simpson, the gardener, came in for a share of the effects of this peculiarity; for no intercession on the part of the Squire could undo what his hasty speeches had brought about. Maurice was grieved to vex him, but seemed to think it altogether out of the question to withdraw his dismissal. He gave Simpson a handsome present of money, and Mr. Tyndal contrived to get him another situation, and a new gardener reigned over the new hothouses that were fast being raised on the ruins of the old.

When the family party reassembled at Christmas-time no one was more welcome or more glad to come back than Maurice Claughton. He turned out the great boxes which he had brought with him from abroad, and which had never been opened till now, and showered curious and valuable trifles on everybody. The simple homely life at the Hall at this festive season was altogether new and delightful to him, and he flung himself into it with heart and soul.

Raymond was not so happy. He had only spoken the truth when he said that he cordially disliked Christmas-time, and after a very short visit, in which he had unavoidably seen more of Agnes and less of Dagmar than he wished, or thought advisable, he went back once more to town.

And now followed the long quiet winter and spring, during which there was little intercourse with the outside world.

The workmen still had possession of the Court, and seemed in no hurry to relinquish it, and the owner thereof would have been puzzled to find a corner in which to bestow his head under his own roof.

He made one or two suggestions as to the propriety of betaking himself elsewhere, but was pressed to stay where he was with such unfeigned cordiality that he must needs yield.

He bought a couple of good horses, which were stabled up at the Court, and Dagmar and her father showed him the way about the country in many long pleasant rides. He threw himself heart and soul into the management of his estates, and did a good deal of miscellaneous reading. And further he produced a portfolio of hurried sketches taken in different places during his wanderings, and proceeded to turn them into very tolerable oil-paintings. No one could doubt that he had plenty of occupation to prevent his feeling dull; yet he had always time to find himself casually in the stable yard when Dagmar went to feed what she called her 'animals,' and though they rarely started to walk together, Dagmar was very seldom suffered to come home alone.

She did not find this new companionship unpleasant, though their conversation was sometimes stiff, sometimes pugnacious, and only now and then abruptly friendly and confidential.

Dick had always been her favourite companion, and she viewed Maurice Claughton much as she might Dick's elder brother, equally good to be tyrannized over and to serve as an escort, and more interesting by virtue of his travels and varied experiences.

One day, as Dagmar, followed by a groom, was riding slowly through one of the lanes near the Court, her horse suddenly started and pricked up its ears. A sound of flying feet was heard in the field on one side of the lane, and the next instant a tall chestnut and his rider came gallantly over the stiff fence and alighted in the lane not many yards in front of the young lady.

Her horse was a little startled, and the new-comer rode swiftly up as if to her assistance, though none was really needed.

It was Maurice Claughton, his face all in a glow of pleasant excitement, with eyes that danced even while he expressed his penitence for having given Miss Tyndal such a start.

'Oh, I am all right,' she said, in her frank way. 'But that is an awkward fence. I think my father would say that you were rash.'

'I am just learning what our English hunters can do,' he answered gaily. 'It is glorious fun—as good as having wings. I have ridden many kinds of animals in my time, but never anything like this, as you may imagine.'

'Nevertheless, if the Chevalier had arrived in the lane on his nose I might have been startled to some purpose,' she answered, smiling. 'I believe most of the hunt rather fight shy of that particular quarter of a mile of fencing—which they say was put up on purpose to keep them out.'

'Oh! I shall join the hunt next year,' he said, turning his horse to ride by her side. 'I would not do it this year, for fear I should commit some unpardonable *bêtise*, such as my foreign bringing up alone could have accounted for.'

'Then you must learn caution,' said Dagmar, with a little air of motherly sedateness. 'My father talks very severely now and then about young men who have no value for their own necks; and if he had seen you just now——'

'No man can die till his day comes,' answered Maurice lightly. 'Surely I have not knocked about half over the world to come to grief in a quiet English lane. May I ask where you are going?'

'I am riding over to Shardbrook, to see the place where Simpson has gone—the man who used to be gardener at the Court.'

'Oh! yes. I remember he went to some place of that name,' answered Maurice, with cheerful unconsciousness of a slight hint of disapproval in her tone. 'How far is it?'

'About twelve miles. I promised his wife and little daughter that I would go and see them in their new home.'

'I will go with you, if I may. May I?'

'If you think that they would care to see you,' said Dagmar, so significantly that Maurice looked at her for a moment in wonder.

Then he laughed. 'Oh! because I had to send him away from the Court, you mean? Well! I was—what is the expression?—rather "let in" for that. If he is doing well now he will not bear malice against me.'

Dagmar decided that it was no use trying to impress this young gentleman with any sense of his inconsiderate conduct, so she gave up the championship of Simpson, and the two chattered gaily as they rode along.

These two, so widely differing in many respects, were very much alike in one thing—they were both oddly compounded of youth and age. Maurice's naturally boyish and slow-growing character had been early developed in one or two directions by his wide experience of the world. And Dagmar was in some respects a deep-thinking woman, while her happy carefully-guarded life and high spirits had kept her, in many others, almost a child.

She had never had a companion before who could follow her in her quick flashes from grave to gay, who seemed to understand equally well her habitual mockery of sentiment, and the occasional lapses into it in which she indulged herself, who could, and did, laugh with her, and yet never committed the unpardonable offence of laughing at what in her heart she reverenced. She liked Maurice's companionship therefore well enough; and would have liked it still better, but that in one of her moments of preternaturally keen-wittedness she had found out that the gossips of the neighbourhood had already speculated as to the likelihood of their 'falling in love' with each other. And at this period of her life Dagmar found something almost insulting in the notion of the love of any mere human young man. The only love-stories that could interest her were centuries old, and faintly sweet, like withered rose-leaves. For the 'true knights and lovers' of old-world story she had some feeling, but as yet she had so little value for her own beauty and womanhood that if she might have had her choice she would rather have been the true knight than his lady-love. After all, it is your plain girl who rightly values beauty and grace, and has her dream of—

> 'A noble lover
> On a red-roan steed of steeds.'

The beautiful young queen who may have these things for the mere lifting of a finger, is mostly thinking about something else, and freezes the ardent would-be lover with the unconscious scorn of eyes that do not even see him.

But Dagmar often forgot what the too vivid imagination of the neigbourhood had suggested to her, and then she was merry and gracious, as now.

So they rode on to Shardbrook, through the soft spring weather, and talked of all manner of things. And when a handsome young pair—who might, could, should, and ought to marry—ride close

together in the mellow May sunshine, and talk of all that comes into their hearts, why! then, there is happiness in store for both of them—or long pain for one.

When they reached Shardbrook and found the pretty cottage, standing near the Rectory, to which Simpson had removed, Dagmar was a little surprised to find that Maurice was intending to accompany her in her visit, But, though she was sure that the people would not want to see him, she could not well tell him so; and after all they were sure to be tolerably civil.

So they went together, up the trim-paved pathway between the little box hedges; and Dagmar tapped lightly upon the half-open door with the handle of her riding whip.

No one answered the summons, and after a moment she pushed the door a little wider and peeped in.

'Why, Janie!' she said, entering, 'are you here all alone?'

Maurice, following her, saw the neatest of cottage-rooms, only differing from the ordinary 'house-place,' in that there was a small, low, iron bedstead just beneath the window. On the bed lay a child, who, from her size, might have been about ten years old, and from her face might have been at least fifteen. It was thin and worn, pinched and hollow-eyed, marked with the traces of recent tears, too, though just now transfigured by a smile of delight.

'Mother's out,' she said, in answer to Dagmar's inquiry. 'She's only gone for a few minutes, down to the shop.'

Maurice brought out one of the well-polished chairs for Dagmar, and stood leaning against the door, looking at the wan childish face.

'And are you in bed now, always, Janie? Are you worse since you came here?'

'Yes, please, ma'am,' answered the child shyly. 'I don't ever get up now.'

'Oh! but that is a pity. How is it, dear? Do you have more pain than you used to have?'

Dagmar had taken off her riding glove, and was stroking the child's hand as she spoke. Janie seemed more intent upon watching the gleam of a ring or two on her visitor's white fingers than on answering questions.

'Was it bad just then, when I came in?' persisted Dagmar.

'Please, ma'am, it's always bad—now. I didn't mean to cry, only there was nobody there—and—I don't cry—very often.'

The child's lips quivered as she spoke, and two more tears brimmed over, in piteous contradiction of her brave speech.

'You poor darling!' cried Dagmar, bending over her and laying her soft fresh cheek caressingly against the little pale one. 'You poor darling! I'm sure you don't. You're always my own brave little woman, aren't you? But you *shall* cry a little now, if it'll make you feel better.'

The tears were in her own eyes; and her other listener, whom she

had forgotten, thought to himself that he had not dreamed that even *her* voice could be so sweet and tender.

'You're not lying easily, are you, darling?' said Dagmar, after a moment, looking at the erection of pillows that seemed to have slipped somehow all awry.

'I don't know,' answered Janie, looking up. 'Mother put me straight before she went out. But I've slipped down somehow, and it hurts.'

'I wish I dared to move you,' said Dagmar tenderly. 'But I never did it before, and I'm so afraid of hurting your little back.'

Maurice laid his whip across a chair and came a step or two nearer.

'Where does it hurt you, little one?' he asked, in a gentle, matter-of-course manner.

'Down here's worst, now,' she answered, laying her hand upon her left side. 'It used to be only my back, and it wasn't so bad then. But since we came here it hurts nearly always—like as if it was in my leg.'

Dagmar, looking up at Maurice in a little wonder, saw a new look of interest come into his face.

'Does it hurt you when you are going to sleep at night?' he asked.

'Yes,' she answered, with a quick look of surprise. 'I keep my leg straight down always when I remember, and then it doesn't hurt so much. But when I'm going to sleep I suppose I forget, and let it move—and then it hurts—so bad.'

Her eyes fill with tears again at the mere remembrance. Maurice came to the side of the little bed.

'May I move you, and put you comfortable, Janie?' he said. 'I think I know how.'

Janie opened her large eyes, and looked first at the strange gentleman, and then at 'Miss Day.' The latter was even more surprised than she was, but would not show it.

'What do you say, Janie?' she said. 'Will you let the gentleman move you?'

Janie's shyness had returned, and made her dumb. But she gave a little assenting nod, and Maurice slipped his lithe sinewy hands under her thin little frame with a confidence that seemed to Dagmar most astonishing. He supported her for a moment or two with one open hand, and with the other not only arranged the pillows behind her, but gently felt all over the poor distorted little spine. Then he seemed to make some little experimental motion—Dagmar could hardly tell in what direction—but the child flinched, and he left off instantly, murmuring some tender little German diminutive. He laid her back upon the pillows, bestowing them behind and round her in a way which Janie's face showed to be a blessed relief.

Then he stood upright, and looked round him, with an absorbed business-like air.

'Look here! my little poor one,' he said, his tongue betraying that

he was deep in thought by its tendency to slip into one or other of his two mother-tongues, French or German. 'Look here! I am going to fasten a clog to one of your little feet, as they do to the horses when we camp out at night. Then the pain will not come, I hope, even when you are going to sleep.'

He was looking round him all the while he was speaking, and as he ended he pounced upon a work-basket that stood in a corner, and drew out a pair of scissors.

'Ask her if she has seen a doctor lately,' he said to Dagmar in French, as he spread out his silk pocket-handkerchief on the table and rapidly divided it into three strips.

'Has Dr. Merivale been to see you lately, Janie?' asked Dagmar.

'Not since we came here,' said the child, with her wise little old-womanly air. 'Mother says it's such a long way for him to come, and he wasn't doing me any good.'

Meanwhile Maurice had knotted his silken strips together, tested their strength, and fastened them in a peculiar kind of knot round the poor little wasted left ankle. Then he brought out the end of the strip at the foot of the bed, and rose and looked round once more.

'Now for something heavy,' he murmured. 'Ah! this may do!' He picked up a large round lump of iron ore, used for propping the door open, and weighed it thoughtfully in his hand, while his two companions looked at him, wondering.

'Miss Tyndal,' he said abruptly, 'have you got a handkerchief?'

'Yes!' said Dagmar, gravely producing one from her little breast pocket.

He took it without apology, tied up the ore in it, and attached it to the strip as it hung just over the foot of the bed. Then, *very* gently, he let go the weight and let the child feel the full strain of it.

'Can you bear that, Kindchen?' he said tenderly.

'Yes, sir,' said Janie, very shyly.

'Well! don't you let any one take it off, until some doctor comes to see you. Good-bye, little one.'

The absorbed professional look dropped from his face, he smiled and nodded to Janie with his usual air of kindly nonchalance, thrust his hands into his coat pockets, and strolled off into the garden. Dagmar talked for a few minutes to her little friend, then went to the door, and looked after him.

'Mr. Claughton,' she said, 'Johnson has some things for Janie in his pocket. Will you ask him to bring them in?'

Maurice went down to the gate, and came back in a moment bringing the little parcels in his own hands.

'There is a woman coming—the mother, I believe,' he said, in a rapid undertone. 'Make her understand that the child *must* see a doctor.'

Dagmar nodded comprehension, and Maurice drew aside as Mrs. Simpson came up the garden, a little flustered by the apparition of three fine horses at her humble gate.

The young lady talked to her a little while of Janie's health and other things, recommended sending for a doctor as strongly as she could, called the good woman's attention to Mr. Claughton's contrivance, which was not to be interfered with, and finally kissed the child and came away.

'Mr. Claughton!' she said, as they rode through the village, 'what do you think is the matter with that poor child?'

'Hip and spine,' answered Maurice briefly. 'The hip disease appears to be the latest development.'

'And will that weight on her foot make her easier?'

'Undoubtedly—if they don't put a chair under it at night "to rest her a little," as people have been known to do.'

'It seems very strange,' said Dagmar musingly.

'I can tell you how it is, if you care to know,' answered Maurice, riding a little closer to her side and dropping his voice to a business-like undertone.

'Please go on,' she said, 'I always like to know "how things are."'

'I will be as little technical as I can,' he said, smiling. 'In cases like this there are two surfaces of diseased bone which can only be kept from touching one another by a constant effort of the muscles. When they touch it is agony. As long as that poor little creature is awake she contrives to keep them apart without knowing how or why. And from sad experience she would keep awake always if she could. But when from exhaustion she begins to drop asleep the muscles contract involuntarily, and then, as she says, it is "very bad!"'

'But she will sleep to-night, you think, without that?' said Dagmar, with her eyes full of tears.

'To-night, I hope, the weight will keep the muscles on the stretch without any effort of her's; and she will sleep until her mother is astonished, and perhaps wakes her to see what is the matter.'

'It is very strange,' said Dagmar again, 'and even stranger that you should know all this. I beg your pardon! I didn't mean to say anything so rude.'

'Oh! I know what you mean,' answered Maurice lightly. 'But the fact is, I thought once of being a doctor.'

Dagmar glanced round at him in surprise. *This* freak of the young master of the Court had never been heard of in England before.

'I studied medicine for two or three years,' he went on, 'and passed two of the preliminary examinations; but the plan was taken up for one whim, and abandoned for another——'

He ended abruptly, and his mobile face took an expression of sudden gloom. Dagmar, covertly watching him, thought how little they knew him after all, and ventured to probe a little.

'Did you not like the profession when you came to see more of it?' she asked.

'I think sometimes that it is the only thing in the way of work that I could ever care for,' he answered impulsively. 'But I gave it

up to please—some one—who had no call that way; and I shall never take to it again. I could not very well set up a surgery at the Court, could I? and start a country practice in opposition to Dr. Merivale.'

He laughed as he spoke, but a little bitterly. The poor country practitioner might have been pardoned for speaking so of the wealthy owner of the Court; but the converse was a little surprising.

Before Dagmar had had time to speak again, a young man came suddenly out at a gate beside the road and advanced towards them. It was young Pointer, and Day would have passed him with a bow, but that he made such evident demonstrations of having something to say. He had not anything to say in reality; but he could not let the two objects of his admiration go by without a word. He detained Dagmar as long as he dared with inquiries about her health and that of all the family, and then he crossed over to Maurice's side.

'I have been wanting to see you,' he said, 'that is—my father wished me to tell you—that if you care for fishing we shall be so pleased if you will try our waters. We have some very pretty trout fishing, much better than yours at the Court.'

'Thank you,' said Maurice; 'your father is most kind.'

'And—of course you will come any day you like—and you will be sure to come in and have lunch with us?'

'You are very good,' said Maurice again. 'I must think of your kind offer. Good-afternoon.'

He delivered himself from young Pointer with a most courteous bow and smile, but Dagmar saw that he was quietly laughing to himself as they rode along.

'Now what shall I do with that kind offer?' he said, as soon as they were out of ear-shot. 'I don't know one end of a fishing-rod from the other, as it happens; but my young friend will not believe me if I tell him so.'

'Oh! you can go and fish all the same,' answered Day. 'You might catch a fish, by accident, and at any rate, you would get a very good luncheon.'

'It might be dearly purchased at the rate of being expected to discourse like Dr. Livingstone, Gordon Cumming, and Miss Bird all in one,' he answered. 'It may be an honour to figure as a hero, even to young Mr. Pointer; but the position has its drawbacks.'

Dagmar smiled to herself. She had often been rather amused at Maurice's position in society; the wonders that were expected of him every time he opened his mouth—the curiosity that was felt as to his habits and feelings. But she had not given him credit for being aware of this too.

'I don't know what to do,' he went on, after a pause. 'These people have been most kind and hospitable in their invitations to me, and so, indeed, have all the neighbours. What can I do to make some acknowledgment of all their kindness? A big dinner is a

most frightful thing, and I have no confidence in my own powers of arranging one, or carrying it successfully through.'

'If you want to entertain the county,' said Dagmar lightly, 'I never knew the county unwilling to be entertained.'

'There are the tenants, too,' he continued, frowning meditatively; 'I ought to do something for them.'

'To make up for the festivities which they did not have when you came of age?'

'When I——? Oh! I know what you mean, now. Well, as there was no one on the spot to entertain them then, I think something ought to be done for them now.'

'I know what you can do,' cried Day, clapping her hands as well as reins and riding-whip would permit. 'You can give a huge garden-party, a regular out-of-doors fête, by way of housewarming. All the tenants can be feasted in a tent, and we will all help to amuse them, and then finish up with a dance in the evening, by moonlight or lamplight, as the case may be.'

'It shall be done!' said Maurice, sharing in her enthusiasm. 'Your's is a most brilliant suggestion, and we will carry it out on a grand scale. But you and Mrs. Tyndal must help me, or I shall come to unutterable grief.'

'Oh, we will help,' said Dagmar gaily. 'I am so glad all this did not take place when you came of age, because then I should have been kept out of it all.'

'In that case everything would have been different,' he answered, rather enigmatically.

Dagmar was too much of a child at heart to consider what the world would certainly say if she and her mother had anything to do with the first entertainment given by the young master of the Court.

She plunged into the discussion of details with her usual glee and energy, and the two rode joyfully home together, making all manner of delightful and impossible plans.

Older and wiser heads raised many objections to most of these; but the only result of these was to make Dagmar a little more in earnest about the affair than she would otherwise have been.

As for Maurice, you could not confirm *his* resolutions, because they were always immovable from the first. Dagmar had said the thing was to be, and he had agreed, and after that there was no need to say more. Mrs. Tyndal resigned herself to circumstances, therefore, and allowed herself to be constituted hostess for the occasion; while she devoted most of her energies to preventing her husband and daughter from putting impossible ideas into Maurice's head.

It was midsummer before the workmen could be got out of the Court; but after that the preparations proceeded merrily.

Every one was asked, and every one accepted, for no one in the neighbourhood was too great or too small to feel an ardent curiosity concerning the young master of the Court.

Nothing could have been more simple and commonplace than the circumstances of his return, and yet the strangest tales were afloat in the neighbourhood concerning him.

He was a bigoted Roman Catholic, and a Romish priest was to be invited down to the Court to preside over and bless the revels. He was a Protestant of the most pronounced, and his father's oratory was being fitted up as a smoke-room. He was going to marry Miss Tyndal, and this fête was for the purpose of making known their engagement. He was married already, and his wife was now in Paris, but would come over in time for the garden-party, when Mrs. Tyndal was to introduce her to her future neighbours.

Various as these stories were, they all agreed in one point, namely, that Maurice's political, religious, and social position would be easily discovered by everybody on the day of the fête.

No one, therefore, would willingly have given up the chance of being present on so decisive an occasion. No one, that is, except Raymond Dayrell. He received a most courteous invitation, not one of the ordinary cards, but a note, written in Maurice's own square, peculiar handwriting. But he wrote in answer, excusing himself on the ground of business, and nobody but Dagmar was surprised.

The day of the fête dawned as fairly as a July day could dawn; and while the party at the Hall were still congratulating themselves about it over the breakfast table, Maurice walked in.

He answered gaily as they all called his attention to the fineness of the weather—each one speaking as though the credit of it were due to some special and private arrangement—and remarked that he had come down in the hopes of getting some breakfast.

'There is nothing to be had up at that place but the anticipation of luncheon,' he said; but Mrs. Tyndal was concerned to observe that he ate no breakfast worth speaking of, after all.

He looked a little nervous, but very handsome, and he made no secret of his trepidation at the idea of meeting all his neighbours together for the first time.

'You will back me up, won't you?' he said to Agnes and Dagmar in an abrupt, boyish fashion. 'You must tell me what I've got to do, and don't let me do anything wrong. I'm awfully afraid of making some fiasco and offending somebody.'

'You won't do that, if you will only have a little confidence in yourself,' said Agnes, in her kind composed way. 'But Day and I are going to make ourselves beautiful, and do our very best to make things go off well.'

Dagmar said nothing, but she was arranging flowers for herself, Agnes, and Dick to wear, with an absorbed air that spoke well for her interest in the day's success.

Maurice contrived to secure a flower for himself before the basket was sent away with the *débris*. If he had asked for it with a shadow

of *empressement* he would not have got it, but he was far too acute to blunder in that way.

The ladies went to dress an hour later, and on their coming down nearly an hour and a half later still, were surprised to find him still waiting for them.

'Why!' cried Mrs. Tyndal, 'surely you ought to be up at the Court. You must have so much to do.'

'Not I!' said Maurice smiling. 'I dare not for my life interfere with anybody. They all seem to understand the affair so very much better than I do. I shall not face the turmoil again without all of you to countenance me.'

There was nothing more to be said—every one was ready, even the Squire and Dick—so the whole party set off. But Mrs. Tyndal felt that she was being entrapped into doing what she had resolved not to do—into being at the Court before the very earliest of the guests. And her gentle prudish soul vexed itself a little at the sight of Dagmar—looking almost bridal in her white dress, but more happy and unconscious than any bride—gliding on through sun and shadow, with the young owner of the Court in his gala dress by her side.

'I know what people will think!' she said to herself. 'No one could help thinking of it who saw them together as they are now. And Day is too young to be talked about so.'

There was much to see when the party first arrived at the Court; for the final touches to the preparations had just been given. Maurice had arranged the flowers himself, it appeared, and even Agnes's critical eyes could find no fault with them. One thing only struck them all as odd, and of that no one cared to speak. The portrait of the late Mr. Claughton was wreathed, almost smothered, in flowers, and a sort of bracket had been arranged below it, which was piled with flowers likewise. It was not English taste, and somehow the portrait looked a little incongruous, with the keen pictured eyes looking out from amongst the soft many-tinted petals.

The guests began to arrive, gentle and simple, and if they were a little disappointed that their sensational anticipations were not realised, they contrived to hide it wonderfully well.

The great park was a brilliant scene, as the numbers began to increase; and the band, stationed under a group of trees, struck up the lively strains so dear to the popular ear. Maurice had ordered them to play all the airs traditionally used on such festive occasions; and from the manner in which he listened to them it was obvious that he had pleased himself by so doing, as well as his guests.

There were amusements of every kind in abundance, both for old and young, rich and poor, and Maurice proved himself a very good host, contriving to give a fair share of notice and attention to all. By the time the great bell rang for the tenants' dinner in the big tent, he had earned suffrages enough, especially from the female portion of the assembly, to have ensured him a seat for the county.

It had been arranged that the *élite* should take luncheon in the Hall while the tenants had their dinner, and then should follow the young landlord into the tent, to see the drinking of his health, and hear him return thanks.

It was a very good luncheon, and a very good dinner, and there is little need to say more about either, since the conversation that went on over them was too desultory to be worth reporting.

Dagmar was seated between two rather uninteresting gentlemen, and not very far from Maurice, and so perhaps may be pardoned for giving most of her attention to the hero of the day.

Her looks were cooler and more critical than those bent on him by any other young lady there; but there was more real sympathy in them. It may be that he felt it so, for his eyes sought hers every now and then, with keen veiled glances, sometimes humorous, sometimes appealing, and always full of a secret understanding.

The long state luncheon came to an end at last, and Maurice gave his arm to the great lady of the day and led her through the courtyard to the tent where the tenants had arrived at the last course of their dinner, and were sitting expectant, with brimming glasses before them. The gaily decorated tent looked very imposing when it was lined with ladies and gentlemen; so imposing that the chief tenant, upon whom the task of the day fell, almost lost his presence of mind, and floundered dreadfully in the speech which he had been for weeks preparing. At last, however, Maurice's health was proposed, and seconded in a few hearty words by Mr. Tyndal, and he came forward, as the cheers died away, to return thanks.

Maurice had always seemed so much at ease with strangers, so particularly self-possessed when in a crowd, that no one had ever expected him to be nervous. It was a surprise to every one now to see that he was as white as a sheet. His lips moved, but no words came.

Three people there were watching him with something more than the friendly curiosity that moved every other pair of eyes present. Mr. Tyndal looked a little startled, and moved hurriedly towards him; Dr. Merivale slipped round behind where he was standing, and put a full glass into his hand; and Mr. Layton, in a leisurely self-possessed fashion, requested permission to say a few words.

As he had intended, this request brought all eyes upon him. With a quaint, humorous smile, he apologised to the company for assuming a privilege that he had abused perhaps too often on former more serious occasions. Delicately he alluded to the pleasure of finding once more in the Court a friend and supporter of the Church that lay so near, and then—finding from a quick side-glance that Maurice had half emptied the glass of Dr. Merivale's prescription, and had got back a little colour in his lips—he bowed and drew back amongst the ladies.

Maurice was no longer so startlingly pale, but it was evident that he had hardly recovered his composure; and perhaps it flashed across

the minds of some of his wonder-loving hearers that possibly he *had* some strange confession to make after all.

His speech, however, was disappointingly brief, commonplace, and to the purpose. There was absolutely nothing to remark in it, except that it seemed to imply that he had hardly yet made up his mind whether to settle down for life at the Court, or to take up his wanderings again and turn his back upon it for ever.

He was unmistakably glad when the speechifying was over, but there was no escape for him at present. As the company strolled out again upon the terrace, more than one of the county neighbours, old friends of the Claughton family, conceived it to be a good time to express formally his goodwill and congratulations, and Maurice had to go through an ordeal almost as formidable as his first presentation to the county society.

Perhaps his foreign breeding stood him in good stead, for he was certainly less awkward and embarrassed than most young Englishmen in his position would have been. But presently, as Dagmar stood for a moment alone, looking down into a little pool, bordered with grey stone and gemmed with water-lilies, she found Maurice by her side.

'Come with me,' he said, pleadingly, yet imperatively. 'Please come; I want to show you something.'

She yielded, thinking nothing of it; but Maurice chose a path which was well screened from observation, mindful perhaps of the meaning glances that would be exchanged at the sight of those two stealing off together.

'It's—it's nothing very particular,' said he apologetically, after a moment; 'but I do so long for a moment's quiet, and a little sensible conversation after all this folly. And you have always been so good to me that I thought you wouldn't mind.'

'This is the first time in my life that any one ever came to me for sensible conversation,' said Dagmar, with her soft rippling laugh. 'It seems to me that the truest kindness to you just now, would be to let you be quiet, and not talk at all. See! I forbid you to speak, till we are past that great holly-tree.'

Maurice looked at her and smiled. She looked at him with a severe 'regard of control,' and then turned her head away, watching the sunlight that glinted down between the tall hornbeams that shut in the path so closely. Maurice went on looking at her, from the hem of her white dress to the brim of her large white hat. He could see nothing of her face but the soft curve of her cheek, and just the tip of her long eyelashes, but on the whole he was content. Perhaps he had studied that face so often and so long that he knew it by heart, despite its thousand swift and lovely changes of expression. Her step was as buoyant as if it moved to some music too ethereal for any other ears to hear, and he knew that she was smiling to herself at some sweet thought that she would enjoy alone.

A huge humble-bee came booming round her, attracted by the

bunch of flowers she wore at her throat; and she turned to watch him, smiling still. Her eyes followed him till they lit upon some long waxen tubes of honeysuckle, the first of the year, and with a half exclamation of delight, she moved to gather some. Maurice came to her side, still not speaking, and reached down the tall straggling branches that waved over her head, and contended for her with the tough twisted stems.

She moved on, arranging her spoils, and they were past the holly-tree before either of them showed any inclination to speak.

'Dagmar!' said Maurice at last, and he had become now so completely one of the family that she hardly noticed that he called her for the first time by her Christian name, 'Dagmar! do you believe that the dead know what we are doing?—what we think of them?'

'I don't know, I have not often thought about it,' she answered, not at all startled by such a subject being so suddenly introduced. 'If I had lost any one who was very dear to me, I think I should be sure they *did* know.'

'Ah! but then,' he said, with half a sigh, 'then the question arises, how *much* do they know? Can they misjudge, and grieve, and be offended, as a living friend might do? Or do they see thoughts as well as actions, and judge us by our motives—by our thoughts of them?'

'You should read your Tennyson on that point,' said Dagmar, as it she were considering the subject in all its bearings.

'I know no English poetry,' answered Maurice simply. 'Should you take him for an authority in such a matter?'

'Well! yes, I suppose so. And he says that if they watch us at all it will be—

> '"With larger, other eyes than ours,
> To make allowance for us all."'

'Yes—— but doesn't it seem sometimes like treason towards the dead, the way in which we use the property that once was their's—spend their money—take their places—sit in their seats—blot out their names?——'

'Not if we don't forget them,' said Dagmar, puzzled. 'It was never made a secret that they would have to leave all those things behind them. And they know that we have only a life-interest in them too.'

'Forget them? No! we can never do that. But if we seem as though we forgot, and pay them not even the poor compliment of leaving their place empty?'

'It seems to me that that would be a poor compliment indeed,' she answered doubtfully.

'Ah! you don't understand,' he said, in a passionate undertone. 'To think that they seemed to take the best part of our hearts—the best joy of life—away with them, and yet that we have left no room

for them to come back; that if they came back it would be the greatest misfortune that could happen to us!'

'*Tennyson again!*' thought Dagmar, but it seemed unsympathetic to say so. So she was silent, and they walked on together, skirting now the fringe of the gardens at the back of the house, walking in a kind of Debateable Land where coops of baby pheasants shared the shelter of the plantations and the advantages of civilisation.

She plucked more honeysuckle from the hedge as they went, and Maurice, as if in emulation, plucked a flower here and there, a yellow rose from a drooping bough, a scrap of dull purple bella-donna, a bit of dark feathering green for a background.

'Do you know what a very ill-omened nosegay you are making there?' asked Dagmar gravely, looking askance at his spoils, while she inhaled the perfume from her own.

'No!' he said. 'I never studied the language of flowers. What do these mean?'

'Why, the nightshade is silence. And the yellow rose means sorrow. And the cypress is—Death.'

'It seems to me that they go very well together,' he answered, between jest and earnest. 'I meant them for you; but if you are superstitious——'

He held them at arm's length, looking at them critically. Dagmar was *not* superstitious; and therefore she did not deny the charge. Like most people who are by nature utterly fearless, she rather liked to play at having fears, to feel the cold delicious thrill of terrors that were not terrible to her. So she was silent, and looked at the ominous floral combination as if she had no desire to possess it.

'Sorrow?' said Maurice slowly, separating the yellow rose from the rest. 'Well, no one would keep that if they could help it. So here goes!'

He threw it with a quick jerk of the hand into the dark green depths of the plantation. Then he took the twig of cypress, and looked at it with a strange dubious smile.

'So this means Death, does it? Well, there is plenty more of it. These paths are all lined with it, we can always get some again if it should be needed. So, for the present, we will dismiss Death.'

He threw it down by the path, and turned the last remains of his bouquet—the nightshade-flower—thoughtfully round.

'And this? This is only silence. There can be no harm in keeping silence. Nay, now I come to think of it, it would be madness to throw away so useful a flower!'

He put the spray, with its dull purple flecked with gold, into his button-hole, where it remained, faded and dejected-looking, when the last guest took his leave that night. One or two elderly and inquisitive ladies nearly wound themselves up to the point of asking Mr. Claughton why he wore that 'nasty poisonous stuff,' and the

rest came to the conclusion that it had something to do with the long *tête-à-tête* which he and Miss Tyndal had had together.

So it had, but not in the way which they supposed.

Meanwhile he 'kept silence,' in more senses than that of which he had spoken; and Dagmar looked at him with a curiously grave considering look.

She would have half despised him if she had thought that he was talking at random, or for effect, but there was something in his manner that forbade her to think so.

It seemed to her that this was a strange way of talking, for the young owner of this beautiful place on his day of triumph. And, with the first suggestion of something mysterious in the air, a keener interest awoke and looked out of her beautiful critical eyes. A prosperous young man, a desirable *parti*, she could afford to scorn, but some one with a story; with a possible trouble in the background, or complication in the future; this was worth consideration.

'He shall tell me some day what it is,' she said to herself; 'let him "keep silence" or no.'

Meanwhile she took a turning that would lead them quickly back into the crowded gardens, and Maurice accompanied her regretfully, aware that his audience was over, but knowing the youthful Majesty far too well to press to have it prolonged.

Refreshments were spread on little tables, dotted here and there about the gardens, and there was unlimited tea for the sex that loves that beverage. Upon these the guests were to sustain nature until the coloured lamps were lighted, and the dancing began in the Hall and on the turf outside.

Very early it was to begin, and very early to end, with a supper laid where the luncheon had been, Maurice declaring very decidedly that he was not going to have the affair dragging on till every one was tired and cross.

It might have been observed that this resolution was taken late one night, when Dagmar, having been out with Dick at half-past five that morning, had found herself sleepy, and had declared in her rash manner that she was *always* sleepy after ten o'clock, and that she could not imagine why people ever stayed up later.

Maurice's consideration was wasted in the present instance, for when the party broke up, Dagmar's cheeks were glowing and her eyes full of light. It was evident that she could have danced all night, and would gladly have done it too.

Those two had had many a waltz together on previous nights, in the drawing-room at the Hall, while Agnes Morrison played for them unweariedly. The excuse was that Maurice needed to learn the English style of dancing, lest he should shock 'the county.' But it was a palpable 'fetch,' since the young man's dancing was perfect, as it was likely to be, considering where and how he had learnt it.

Nevertheless, he professed to find that his step did not suit that

of most of the young ladies present, and on that flimsy pretext contrived to beguile Dagmar out of more dances than Mrs. Tyndal quite approved.

The drawing-room, cool and dimly lighted, and sweet with flowers, was a convenient resort for couples between the dances as well as for non-dancers who feared the draughts of the great Hall. Some couples, it is true, preferred more private haunts, but the master of the house could not risk being out of the way if he should be wanted—even if he could have hoped that Dagmar would sit upon the stairs, or in the conservatory with him.

So they were both in the drawing-room, late on in the evening after supper, in a pause while 'the band' had gone to refresh itself before the final dance, when something happened that destroyed Maurice's equanimity for the second time that day.

The room was well filled, and there was a soft buzz of talk and laughter in the air. Mr. Tyndal was deep in conversation with some of his brother squires, and Mrs. Tyndal, in her kindly fashion, was hearing of everybody's pet ailments, and racking her brains for remedies for each and all.

Maurice and Dagmar were left a little to themselves in one corner, looking at a very lovely little sketch which Maurice had just bought, and perched upon an easel for his own private delectation. *They* were looking at the sketch; and most of the other couples were more or less looking at them.

Suddenly a loud noise was heard; the cord that held Mr. Claughton's portrait, above the mantelpiece, had suddenly parted. The picture slipped down, rested for an instant upright on the bracket below it, then fell forward, crushing the flowers with which the bracket was heaped, and so reached the floor.

It was a startling incident for the moment, but it would have been passed over in a moment, but for Maurice's strange way of taking it. In the very instant of the crash he turned and saw what had happened, but while every other gentleman in the room ran instinctively to pick up the fallen picture, he stood motionless, turning for the second time so pale that every one must needs notice it. He looked up at the empty panel where the portrait had hung; and spoke, as if answering some call that had come to him through the tumult of exclamation that filled the room. Most of those present only knew or guessed that those unfamiliar accents were German.

But Dagmar was standing very near to the young master of the Court, and she was a very fair German scholar for one who had never been out of England. It seemed to her, when she recalled his words afterwards, that he had said, '*Be content, my friend! Heart's dearest, be content—I understand!*'

But the words seemed so strange, under the circumstances, that she more than half thought herself mistaken.

Maurice recovered himself after a moment, and became aware that

every one was staring at him. Mr. Layton came to his rescue, once more, as he had done before.

The picture had been picked up, and was leaning against the wall; and the Vicar affected to discover some damage to its frame which gave occupation to all eyes and tongues for a moment, and in that interval Maurice escaped from the room. He came back again in a few moments, looking much as usual, and professed to have been engaged in driving the band back to their post. Mirth and gaiety went on as before; and only Mr. Layton stood thoughtfully stroking his chin before the dethroned picture, setting a more than usually acute intellect to the unravelling of the first threads of a mystery.

Perhaps it was natural that out of so mixed a company, the clerics should instinctively draw together. But Mr. Layton started presently, on looking up, to see Mr. Pymont standing close at his elbow, also studying the fallen portrait.

Their eyes met, and for a moment they both bore a curious resemblance to two dogs who had simultaneously struck the scent or sight of some unknown game. Sleuth-hound and gaze-hound they might have been called, the one with the grand stately patient face, the other with the small head, keen eye, and long jaw. Woe to the man whose secret had been caught scent of by such a pair!

I must confess that, though Mr. Layton was in my opinion quite as good a man as the other, Mr. Pymont's thoughts at the moment were the more like those usually supposed to befit a Christian priest.

'This young man's religious education has been neglected,' he said to himself. 'There is something wrong about him somewhere—some secret which in happier ages of the Church he would certainly have told to his priest. What a privilege it would be to win him to do so now; to win him to feel the relief of confession, and to bring him to repentance and amendment.'

Meanwhile, Mr. Layton was, I fear, taking a somewhat heathen view of the matter. He, too, was thinking, 'There is something wrong here. I wonder if it is what I have half suspected, and if it is, what he will do? He has had a wild bringing up; but I would trust those eyes for honesty, in the long run, against any eyes I have seen. I wonder what he will do?'

Mr. Layton strolled back into the Hall, and his brother cleric followed him. Maurice did not look, just then, like one weighed down by a guilty secret. He was dancing again with Dagmar, the handsomest, blithest-looking couple in the room. Sentiment he had not dared to attempt, but Day was gracious that night, and when she was gracious she could be intensely amusing. His brown face was bright with suppressed mirth, responsive to the dimple and twinkle in hers, and they talked in easy undertones as they floated round the room together, the envy of couples less accomplished and less perfectly matched.

Mr. Layton watched them with keen artistic pleasure till the dance

was over, and then lost sight of them for a few moments. When he saw them again, Dagmar was sitting demurely by her mother; and Maurice was standing at some distance talking to, or rather being talked to, by Mr. Pymont.

Mr. Layton's lip curled with a smile of appreciation.

'There's a man that goes straight to his point,' he said to himself. 'But, at such a time and place, I think he will find that the straightest road is not always the shortest.'

Mr. Pymont seemed to be talking very earnestly, in his usual gentle deprecatory, tactless fashion; and Maurice was listening with an odd kind of smile, as men will listen when serious subjects are forced upon them at uncongenial times.

He broke away presently, and came down to where Mr. Layton was standing, still smiling, but with a glow of subdued irritation in those expressive eyes of his.

'Mr. Pymont has been telling me that there are no confessionals now in English churches, and that it is a great pity,' he said, after a moment, with a little laugh. 'Shall I build you a confessional in your little church up here, Mr. Layton?'

'Thanks!—but there are many things that are wanted more,' said the Vicar meditatively. 'We should need to educate the people up to the practice first; and that would hardly be done in this generation.'

'Yes?' said Maurice, with the same air of half-irritated amusement. 'Mr. Pymont, too, says that if the practice could be revived it would matter less about the buildings. He says that it would be a great blessing and comfort to all, if they only knew it. He seems to think that it would be a special blessing and comfort to me —to *me!*'

He laughed again as he spoke, but his eyes flashed and dilated, as those of a miser might who saw an intrusive hand laid heedlessly near his hidden store.

'You say there are many things that are needed more,' he said, after a moment, cooling down a little, 'I have heard something about that before. Tell me what is most wanted—a new window, new floor, new roof, or all three? I will gladly do whatever you wish, and it is my business, I am told.'

Mr. Layton bit his lip, and looked down.

'Thank you,' he said, somewhat slowly. 'This is hardly the place or time to accept or refuse so important an offer. But you must not be offended if, on thinking it over, I decide to go on as we are, at least for a time. I think, for the present, it may be best to make no changes.'

For one moment the look in Maurice's eyes reminded Mr. Layton that hawks have under their dark eyebrows the same peculiar yellow-hazel gleam. The next moment all the keenness of the glance was gone; and the young master of the Court had on that blank

stiffness of manner which with him meant shyness. Such an offer, thrown back as it were in his face, might well make him feel embarrassed, and the Vicar likewise. Mr. Layton was not sorry when at that moment one of the county magnates came up to say 'good-night,' bringing his wife to take her leave also, and to express her gratitude for the charming day which they had all so much enjoyed.

'Good-nights' once begun, it was not long before the whole party had taken leave, and the large well-lighted rooms had the true 'banquet-hall deserted' air.

Maurice had put the Hall party into their carriage last of all, with a protest against driving on so lovely a night, and an offer to walk down with them through the fields. But the elders vetoed this proposal, and Mrs. Tyndal, in her gentle anxious way, begged Maurice to go straight to bed, for he looked tired to death.

Whether he took her advice or not, he certainly went up to his own room as soon as the house was empty, carrying with him the fallen picture. The next morning the cord was repaired, and it was hanging at the foot of his bed, where the keen pictured eyes could meet his, with the last candle-glimmer at night, and the first peep of day-dawning.

(To be continued.)

CAMEOS FROM ENGLISH HISTORY.

CAMEO CCXLVIII.

THE SECRET TREATY OF DOVER.

1668–1672.

We have fallen on evil days in these which followed the Restoration. Strictness of life had been most unfortunately confounded with disloyalty by the young and gay, and society might be said to be divided into three chief sections: that of the Court, deeply tainted with the vices and dissipations adopted during the exile at Paris; that of the sturdy old Church party, the better and higher Cavalier class, who bravely and faithfully endured neglect and depression; and the large number of old Puritans, who were the more revolted by the licentiousness of the Court.

The period of five years, for which the Conventicle Act was to run, had expired, and the King would fain not have renewed it, but the Parliament, who believed that schism involved fresh rebellion, was still set upon the continuation, being afraid on the one hand of the Sectarians coming into power, and on the other, suspicious that the King intended to favour Romanism.

These suspicions were intensified by the Duchess of York, who was in very weak health, becoming a Roman Catholic, in spite of the entreaties of her father, the exiled Clarendon, and of his warnings that she would probably be deprived of her children if she did so. This may have alarmed her the less because she knew how strongly her husband was inclined in the same direction, ever since he had read Heylin's 'History of the Reformation,' which contradicted many of the ordinary misstatements on the Protestant side. James wished to attend the Anglican service outwardly, and to be only in secret a Roman Catholic, but the Jesuit mission priest Symonds forbade this, and the Pope refused to grant him a dispensation. He therefore sought a private interview with his brother, and confessed his intention. Charles said his own opinions were much the same, and the two brothers consulted Lord Arundel, the head of an old Roman Catholic family, also Clifford and Arlington, who were both undecided in their faith. Charles lamented the being obliged to profess a religion that he did not approve, and it was agreed that while James, who was always the more straightforward of the two, should openly

avow his change of opinion, Charles should wait, try the temper of the nation, and consult the King of France.

For Charles was in close communication with France, through his mother and sister. Henrietta, the young Duchess of Orleans, had developed into great beauty and grace, quite outshining the poor, meek, dull Queen, and charming all who approached her, except perhaps her husband, who was vain, selfish, foolish, and extremely jealous. Indeed, Henrietta—or Madame, as she was usually called—might well vex a wiser man, for she was passionately fond of pleasure and amusement, and proud of charming as a woman more than as a princess, and she was continually committing imprudences. Her love of admiration made her so careful of her beauty that she would not allow her little daughter to kiss her, for fear of spoiling her complexion. The universal whisper of the Court was that if the King had known what she would become, he would certainly have made her his Queen, and she had a capacity for State affairs such as poor Marie Therèse had never shown.

She had always been the pet of her own family, and her brother was wont to write to her merry gossipping letters, so familiar that he called his mother in them by the old baby name of Mam; and he further told her of his plans, and his motives in joining the Triple Alliance, in a manner showing that he meant all to be communicated to Louis. The French King was ready to purchase Charles's consent to the dismemberment of Holland by a share in the spoils, by subsidies enabling supplies from Parliament to be dispensed with, and by support in case of an insurrection upon Charles being received into the Church of Rome.

Nor was Charles greatly indisposed to accept these terms, shocking as they were to any true-hearted Englishman; the difficulty was who should conduct the business, since the utmost caution was necessary. Charles proposed Buckingham, but his sister objected, as the Duke had manifested so much admiration for her that secrets with him would infallibly excite the jealousy of Monsieur. It was impossible to admit this last to the scheme, as he was such a foolish, self-important babbler that all the Court would speedily have known it; and on the other hand, when Madame permitted Buckingham to be an agent, Colbert was not to be told lest he should communicate too soon with the rest of the English ministry. One by one, however, all the Cabal were admitted to a certain knowledge of the plot, though its details were only fully known to the two Kings and the Duchess.

She, poor thing, had no feelings as an Englishwoman, having been in exile from earliest babyhood, and bred up entirely in France, so as to look upon the aggrandisement of Louis XIV. as a paramount object, and the conversion of her brothers to the Romish Church as a blessed work; while as to crushing the liberties of the people, the code in which she had grown up was that they ought to have none.

It was intended that she should go to London to make the final arrangements, but this was deferred first by the birth of a daughter, and then by the death of her mother.

Queen Henrietta Maria had for several months been in failing health, and in August she became much worse, with shooting pains, and violent cough, so as not to be able to sleep. Her French doctors prescribed opium, but she protested against this, saying that Doctor Mayerne had warned her against the drug, as specially dangerous to her constitution. However, all the French physicians combined to recommend the dose; she was wakened out of a quiet sleep to take it; she swallowed it, and never woke again!

The grief of her children was great, especially that of the Duchess of Orleans. Indeed, she had always been a most affectionate mother, and her children a wonderfully united family. She was buried at St. Denys, among her royal forefathers, and four days later, at the convent of Chaillot, all her Court attended a magnificent requiem service, when Bossuet preached one of his most eloquent sermons.

It was considered to have made a deep impression on the Duchess of Orleans, but she supposed her undertaking to be so praiseworthy that religious feeling only impelled her the more. Letters were written by her brothers begging for a visit from her; but as her husband was not included in the invitation, he was much displeased, and refused his consent till Louis angrily told him that the journey was for the interests of the kingdom, and was not to be opposed, and then he would not consent to her going any further than Dover, and that only for three days.

To the outer world, it was to appear that, on Louis going with all his train to take possession of his Flemish conquests, Madame seized the opportunity of a hurried visit to Dover to see her brothers. There was much tragi-comedy in the expedition. There was an enormous cavalcade of carriages and riders, for there went on this journey the King, the Queen, the young Dauphin, Monsieur, Madame, Mademoiselle, and the whole train of gentlemen and ladies-in-waiting on all these personages, the officers of State, endless servants, and a large escort of cavalry.

They travelled through Senlis, Compiègne, and St. Quentin, but all the time there was pouring rain, and the heavy coaches had to plough their way through ever deepening mud. Mademoiselle, after all her disappointed hopes of crowned heads, had fixed her affections on a gay and impetuous cadet of the Gascon house of Lauzun, and she records all the anxieties she suffered on his behalf, when, as he delivered messages on horseback and bareheaded, the rain streamed down his hair.

Near Landrécies, where the party intended to sleep, the dismal news came that the bridge across the Sambre had broken down under some of the harbingers of the expedition, and that the river had overflowed its banks. Nothing was to be done but to take shelter in

a great double barn, where every one was huddled together, with nothing to eat but a little soup, and a few chickens, and as there were no knives and forks, these had to be torn apart, and eaten with the fingers. Lucky were those who could get a straw mattress, or a carriage cushion for the night, and the Queen was greatly scandalised that there was no partition in the barn, though Madame and Mademoiselle tried to laugh off their discomforts. Happily it was the month of May, and at four in the morning Louvois brought the tidings that the bridge was mended; and the party, all looking faded and worn, returned to their carriages, and finished their night's rest in the rooms prepared for them at Landrécies.

Monsieur was in exceedingly bad temper, and made it a subject of conversation that an astrologer had told him he would be married several times. He added that he thought this probable, since Madame was much out of health, could swallow little but milk, and generally went to bed at the end of each day's journey. He tried to retract his consent to her going to England, and only gave way on the positive command of the King. When she parted with the others at Lille he had been treating her in private with so much unkindness that she could not conceal her grief. Her suite was carefully chosen, and did not include any one of such high rank as to make difficulties about precedence. Altogether she carried 237 persons with her.

Lord Sandwich had been waiting for her at Dunkirk, and brought her to Dover, where her brothers, with Prince Rupert and the young Duke of Monmouth, were awaiting her.

She tried to persuade Charles that, as a Romanist reigning over the English after the fashion of Louis, he would be far more secure than amid all the conflicting parties he had to play off one against the other; but whatever Charles might wish, he knew the temper of his people too well to believe such a thing possible, and he told her that he was not so entirely satisfied of the truth of the Catholic religion as to risk so much for it, nor did he believe that his subjects would endure to assist France in putting down the Dutch, so that all that was obtained was a treaty binding England to be neutral when Louis should attack Holland.

Henrietta went as far as Canterbury, where she was met by Queen Catharine and the Duchess of York. The second daughter of the latter, the little Lady Anne, had been over-fed and petted by her mother till her health was out of order, and her eyes affected—she had been sent to her grandmother, Queen Henrietta, and afterwards transferred to the nursery of her aunt, whose eldest daughter was of about the same age.

Henrietta implored her brother to let her remain altogether in England, away from her unkind husband and his minions; but Charles thought this too dangerous, and though he fondled her, fêted her, and gave her a large sum of money, he would not retain her, and this he was soon bitterly to rue.

He told her, when he made her this present, that he wished for one of her jewels. She sent one of her maids of honour, a beautiful Breton girl, named Louise de la Querouaille, to fetch her casket, on which he told her that the fair Louise herself was the jewel that he craved; but Henrietta refused, declaring that she held herself accountable to the parents for their daughter, though when hard pressed, she allowed that if the girl were appointed maid of honour to Queen Catharine, she could not prevent her acceptance of the post.

Tearfully the brothers and sister parted on board ship at Dover on the 12th of June. The Duchess was welcomed by her brother-in-law, the King, who thought she had done his work effectually, but his warmth only enhanced the jealous hatred of Monsieur, who was raging at his wife's importance in negotiations of which he was permitted to know nothing.

Philippe of Orleans had much in common with his father, Louis XIII. and his uncle, Gaston of Orleans, in especial a great love of unworthy favourites. The chief of these was a certain Chevalier de Lorraine, an illegitimate son of the Duke of Lorraine, and a mischievous man, who had done his best to sow dissension between Monsieur and Madame, and had likewise been personally insolent to the King. He had been arrested, and was kept in prison, while Monsieur never ceased to importune the King, and to insist on his wife's doing the same, for the return of his favourite.

Exasperated by refusal, and annoyed at witnessing Henrietta's popularity, and her confidential conversation with his brother, Monsieur carried her off to St. Cloud. There, on one of the last days of June, after wandering by moonlight in the garden with Madame de la Fayette, she fell asleep on some cushions, and on awaking, asked for a glass of succory water. She had scarcely swallowed it before she exclaimed, 'Oh! what a stitch in my side! Oh! what pain; I cannot bear it!'

She turned deadly pale, and was carried to her room, where she continued to be in great anguish, writhing and rolling from side to side, and nothing gave the slightest relief. She became sure that she was dying, and by poison, but the doctors insisted that it was only colic and there was no danger, and absolutely refused her entreaties for an emetic. When morning came, the King, in great distress, arrived with the Queen, Mademoiselle, and the Countess of Soissons (one of Mazarin's nieces). They waited helplessly, and Henrietta told Louis that in her he lost one of his best servants. He wept over her, but did not remain, because the etiquettes due to his presence interfered with the last rites, for which she begged.

Her regular confessor was a Capuchin, whom Monsieur himself pronounced to be fit for nothing but to sit in her carriage. Bossuet was proposed, and she begged for him, but he was not at once to be found, and a monk named Feuillet, a Jansenist, was brought in.

He wrote down the account of his interview with the once brilliant, lovely, admired princess, thus cut off at twenty-six years of age.

'You see, M. Feuillet, the state to which I am reduced.'

'To a good state,' said the priest. 'I presume that you will confess that there exists a God, whom during your life you have too little known.'

'It is true, my God, that I have not known Thee,' she said, with a fervour that made the good man hopeful.

'You have been in the habit of confessing?' he asked, and on her affirmative, 'I suppose then that you have confessed having many times violated your baptismal vows?'

'I never was told that was an offence against God,' she replied.

'How, Madame? If you had made an engagement with a private individual and had not kept it in one clause, would you not think you had done ill?'

'Alas! I should.'

'That, Madame, is a contract you have made with God; it has been sealed with the blood of Jesus Christ. At your death, angels will present this promise to God on your behalf; by this you will be judged. Madame, you have never known the Christian religion!'

'Oh! what shall I do! I see clearly that my confessions and communions have ever been worthless. Tell me what to do!'

Here followed as full a confession as the condition of the sufferer permitted, and Feuillet then told her, 'You have sinned a thousand times, but think of the thousand mercies of God. The thief on the cross has risen to Heaven.'

She devoutly communicated, and presently after, the English Ambassador, Sir Ralph Montague, came in, and received her last messages for her brothers. Speaking English, Montague asked her whether she thought herself poisoned. The word caught the ear of her confessor. He said (whether the official or Feuillet does not appear), 'Madame, you must accuse no one, but offer your life to God as a sacrifice,' and she would not answer. She desired that her papers should be given to Montague, sent affectionate messages to her brothers, and a ring to Charles from her finger.

Bossuet came just in time to pray with her.

'I have neglected my salvation too long,' she said, but while sinking fast, she still paid attention to the prayers, and after this night of agony, died on the morning of the 30th of June.

Was she poisoned? Charles, on the first news, passionately execrated her husband, but recovering himself, commanded that the subject should never be mentioned. Louis privately examined her maître d'hôtel, who had no doubt of the foul play, and said the poison must have come from the Chevalier de Lorraine to d'Effiat, who had contrived to throw it into the victim's jar of chicory water. 'My brother, did he know?' asked the King.

'No, sire, none of us were fools enough to tell him. He keeps no secrets.'

'That is all I wanted to know,' said Louis, with a long breath, as of one relieved from a great oppression.

Still he ventured on no prosecutions. Poor Henrietta left two daughters, one about five years old, whose history was as brief and sad as her own, and the other a babe of a few months old.

Monsieur immediately gratified his curiosity by ransacking his wife's papers, and compelling her ladies to help him to read the cyphers; nor would he give up the money which she had charged the English ambassador to distribute among her servants, and when Mademoiselle called on him the next day, she found him absorbed in trying long violet velvet mantles on his own little Marie Louise, her cousin, Lady Anne Stewart, and even the baby. He was now desirous of marrying Mademoiselle, though she was twice his age, but she knew him far too well, and moreover was resolved on wedding no one save the Count of Lauzun.

Monsieur gave his hand after five months to Elizabeth Charlotte, daughter to Charles Louis, the Elector Palatine, a strange, rude, clever woman, whose memoirs of the Court are at once witty and coarse, a great contrast to her beautiful predecessor. The King told her privately of his own absolute acquittal of his brother.

As to Mademoiselle, on the 5th of December, Madame de Sevigné wrote the following famous, and it may be feared, untranslatable, letter to her cousin, M. de Coulanges, who was at Lyons.

'I am about to tell you the most astonishing, the most surprising, the most marvellous, the most miraculous, the most triumphant, the most bewildering, the most unprecedented, the most singular, the most extraordinary, the most incredible, the most unexpected, the greatest, the smallest, the rarest, the commonest, the most remarkable, the most secret until to-day, the most brilliant, the most enviable—a thing of which there is one example in past ages, and that not complete, a thing that nobody believes at Paris (so how can it be believed at Lyons?), a thing that will set every one crying, "Mercy on me!" a thing to be done next Sunday, when those who behold it will believe their eyes. A thing to be done on Sunday, but perhaps not on Monday. I cannot make up my mind to tell you. Guess! Once, twice, thrice! Give it up. M. de Lauzun will be married on Sunday at the Louvre to—guess whom; I give you four guesses, I give you ten, I give you a hundred. Mme. de Coulanges is saying, "It is very hard to guess. It is Mme. de la Vallière." Not at all, Madame! "No doubt it is Mlle. de Retz." Not at all, you are very countrified! "How stupid we are!" you say. "It must be Mlle. Colbert. Still less certainly it is Mlle. Crequy." Not yet; I must tell you at last. On Sunday, at the Louvre, he marries, with the King's permission, Mademoiselle—Mademoiselle de—Mademoiselle—Guess the name. He marries Mademoiselle. My word—upon my word: on my sworn

word, Mademoiselle! the great Mademoiselle—Mademoiselle, daughter to the late Monsieur—Mademoiselle, granddaughter to Henri IV. Mademoiselle d'Eu, Mademoiselle de Dombes, Mademoiselle de Montpensier, Mademoiselle d'Orléans. Mademoiselle, the King's first cousin, Mademoiselle intended for the throne, Mademoiselle, the only match in France fit for Monsieur. There's a fine subject of conversation!'

But on the 19th, Madame de Sevigné had to write, 'What is called falling from the clouds, took place yesterday at the Tuileries.'

Poor Mademoiselle had made the mistake of waiting for a week, during which the King was beset by remonstrances from his brother, his wife, and others. The Prince of Condé declared that he would go to the wedding, and shoot the bridegroom through the head immediately after. The poor lady had given her intended four dukedoms, and he had taken the title of Montpensier, when on the very day when the King was to have witnessed the contract, he sent for the couple and informed them in the Prince's presence, that he found that it concerned his reputation, and forbade them to think any more of the marriage.

Lauzun, who had been passive in the matter, listened respectfully, but Mademoiselle shed floods of tears, took to her bed, and after many vain entreaties, retired and kept a curious half literary, half Arcadian Court at Eu. Lauzun, beginning to long after the promotion he had lost, begged Mme. de Montespan to intercede for him, and hid himself in her room to listen. Finding that she did not mention him, he afterwards reproached her angrily, and was in consequence arrested and sent to Pignerol, where his society was the first alleviation of the captivity of Fouquet. This year, 1671, Condé, who had always hated the wife to whom he ought to have been so grateful, took the opportunity of a quarrel between her attendants of sending her as a captive to his château at Châteauroux, where this good and faithful woman actually remained in seclusion and disgrace all the rest of her life.

Condé had quite recovered his favour at Court, and the King granted his request to visit him at Chantilly, the old abode of the Montmorencys, his ancestors. Louis had never come before, knowing the enormous trouble and expense his arrival entailed, and actually on this occasion the Prince's maître d'hôtel, Vatel, was absolutely distracted, and, under the impression that there was not sea-fish enough for the guests, thought his honour stained, and committed suicide. When the loads of fish arrived, and he was wanted to distribute them, he was found weltering in his blood, on the floor of his own room. But the company ate the fish all the same.

In the meantime, Charles II., in spite of his grief, did not respect the wishes of his sister, but obtained the nomination of the beautiful Louise de la Querouaille as maid of honour to his wife, and brought her to England, where she used her fascinations to keep him to his

French alliance. This brought on poor Henrietta's memory blame she did not deserve, namely of having brought over *la belle Louise* with the set purpose of ministering to her brother's vices. The Duchess of Portsmouth, as the lady was entitled, became a reigning beauty as Charles grew tired of the coarse violence of the Duchess of Cleveland.

As to the fulfilment of the treaty, Charles durst not incur the fury of the people by becoming a Romanist. He once said that he was determined never to be sent on his travels again, and whenever Louis pressed him, he put the matter off. He must be instructed, and by an Englishman. That man must be not only a theologian, but a scientific man, or the public would take alarm at his conferences with the King. And again, an English missal and Communion in both kinds were made conditions; but after a time Charles avowed that the change would be too perilous; and Louis perceived that if he thus provoked his people's indignation he would become a useless ally.

His more sincere brother, James, became very ill soon after his sister's death, and on the 31st of March, 1671, he lost his wife, Anne Hyde, who, after receiving the Sacraments after the Roman use, was prayed with by the Bishop of Oxford. She left four children: Mary, nine years old, Anne, a year younger, Edgar, five years of age, and Catharine, a babe of six weeks, but both these last died in the course of the following year. The little Lady Anne had been brought home on her aunt's death, and placed with her elder sister at Richmond Palace under the care of Lady Frances Villiers, daughter of the Earl of Suffolk, and wife of Sir Edward Villiers. With this lady's six daughters the two princesses grew up, but with very little care or attention given to their education.

Strange evil times were those. There were habits of violence beneath the gaiety of the Court. For a contemptuous reference in Parliament to the dissipation of the King, two emissaries of the Duke of Monmouth seized on Sir John Coventry in the Haymarket, beat him and slashed his nose with a penknife, so as permanently to disfigure him. Monmouth, a youth of about eighteen or twenty, was foremost in all manner of vices, and one of his companions was the young Duke of Albemarle, who had succeeded his father, Monk, the General and Admiral in January, 1670. These young men, with eight others, in a drunken frolic attacked the watch, and killed the beadle, entreating for his life on his knees, and Charles, to save his son, pardoned them all for this abominable outrage.

Even the sober-minded young Prince of Orange, though delicate and asthmatic, and of grave nature, was, when visiting his uncles, drawn into a riot, and broke the windows of the maids of honour by way of proving his spirit to his young cousin Mary, to whose hand he began to aspire. In going home from a dinner with him, on a night in February, 1671, the good old Duke of Ormond was subjected to a strange outrage in St. James's Street—his servants overpowered, and

himself dragged out of his carriage, placed on horseback behind a man, to whom he was fastened by a leathern belt. The Duke heard the party sending on some of their number to Tyburn to prepare for hanging him on the common gibbet. It was pitch-dark, all the houses shut up, no lights in the streets; but near Knightsbridge, the Duke, by putting his foot under that of the rider, contrived to drag him off his horse, and while struggling on the ground, footsteps were heard, the belt had given way, and the fellow, after discharging two pistols, fled, leaving the Duke but little injured. The King offered £1000 for the apprehension of the ruffians, but they were undetected; only it oozed out that the leader was a desperate Irishman, Colonel Blood of Sarney, who had been outlawed for an attempt to seize Dublin Castle.

In the ensuing May, a seeming clergyman called on Mr. Edwards, keeper of the regalia in the Tower, an old man of eighty, with proposals to marry his nephew to Edwards' daughter. A day or two later he called again with two companions, begging to see the Crown jewels; but, as soon as they were in the room, they threw a cloak over Edwards' head, gagged him, and promised to spare his life if he would be quiet. The faithful old man, however, fought hard, and was knocked down and wounded, before the fellows could seize their prey. The clergyman put the crown under his cassock, the globe was hidden in another man's breeches, the sceptre filed in two and put into a bag; but by this time Edwards' son discovered what was going on, and gave the alarm, and the ruffians were seized, and carried before a magistrate.

Charles came to the examination, and the clergyman confessed that he was Colonel Blood, and that he had not only intended to hang the Duke of Ormond, but to shoot the King, only he had been overcome by the awe of majesty! He said he was one of 800 sworn to avenge each other's blood, so that if the King put him to death, it would be at his own peril; but to pardon him would make all his friends faithful.

And strange to say, Charles did pardon him, gave him compensation for his forfeited estate, and, stranger still, made him a gentleman of his retinue. The faithful Edwards had the barren recompense of knighthood. These were odd times, but nothing more extraordinary or mysterious than this took place in the reign.

PREPARATION OF PRAYER-BOOK LESSONS.

XLII.

CHURCHING OF WOMEN.

Susan. Now for the Mothers' Thanksgiving. I suppose it was continued from the Jewish times, which is kept before our minds by the Purification of the Blessed Virgin. I remember, as a child, the first time I heard it at church, being told it was thanksgiving for the gift, and being very much puzzled to find no mention of the baby. I suppose the 127th Psalm was not the one used?

Aunt Anne. The choice of that is by our own Church. No; the principle of the service does not concern the child, but the mother, who has undergone the special penalty of womanhood, bequeathed because Eve was foremost in the transgression, and thus connected with original sin. As the leprosy was made a type of sin, and there was special cleansing to restore the convalescent to the congregation, so it was with woman after bringing forth an heir of sin, corruption, and death.

S. It sounds very sad.

A. So 'the Thracian wives of yore,' to whom the glimmering of hope was unknown, wept and wailed over their new-born infants, while the Israelite woman lived in hope that each might be the promised Seed.

S. I remember being told that Eve's exclamation over the first-born child in the world was properly, 'I have gotten *the* man from the Lord.'

A. 'With the help of the Lord,' in the Revised Version.

S. And oh! how sorely she must have been disappointed when this man, whom she hoped to find the Deliverer, became the murderer.

A. 'Behold, I was shapen in wickedness; and in sin hath my mother conceived me' (Ps. li. 5), had to be impressed on all in hope. So in Lev. xii., the law was given that the mother should be secluded for seven days after a son's birth, fourteen after a daughter's, and that she should not come to the sanctuary till thirty-three days after bringing forth the one, sixty-six after the other, and then that she should present a lamb for a burnt offering and a dove for a sin offering; or if that were beyond her means, two turtle-doves to be offered as an atonement.

S. Why? An atonement is a sin offering!

A. As an acknowledgment that her original sin had to be atoned for by the sacrifice of One pure and innocent.

S. And why was it to be twice as long before her purification after a girl's birth?

A. I suppose both because woman was the first to sin, and because 'the maid child' could not possibly bring the reconciliation.

S. One always begins by fancying that the turtle-doves offered on the Feast of the Purification were for the redemption of the first-born; but I know now that for Him, the half-shekel was given, and the doves were for her. But this Birth required no purification.

A. Certainly not; but all the ritual of the Law was fulfilled in practice as well as completed in our Lord, so that in Him the one Covenant might be finished and the other begun. And with the Blessed Virgin came the new beginning for us. Look at St. Paul's words in 1 Tim. ii. 15, Revised Version.

S. 'But she shall be saved through the child-bearing, if they continue in faith and love and sanctification with sobriety.' The child-bearing, then, does not mean her own, as it seems to do in the older translation.

A. The best commentators understand it to mean that the exclusive part that woman had in the Holy Incarnation and Nativity of the promised Seed of the Woman, does away with the spiritual, though not with the temporal penalty for being the first in the transgression; and, as you well know, Christianity has steadily raised the tone and the influence of woman, so that the Magnificat is the special song of her veritable emancipation. 'He hath regarded the lowliness of His handmaiden' is true of our whole sex.

S. I remember, too, how St. Paul speaks of there being in Christ: 'neither male nor female, for ye are all one' (Gal. iii. 28). And so the one great Birth really sanctifies all births, whether of man or woman. I wonder whether that was the reason that the Puritans made such a set against Churchings—as a Jewish ordinance.

A. You are thinking of the Conference when James I. saved the custom only on the plea that it was hard to get women to come to church at all, so that it was well they should sometimes be compelled. I expect that the more reasonable foundation of the objection, so to say, was based on purification being no longer needed; but the popular dislike was probably founded on externals, especially the wax candle, which in the elder ritual was offered by the parents.

S. What was the reason of that? Was it anything to do with Candlemas Day, the old name for the Purification festival day?

A. Everything. On the 2nd of February, certainly as far back as the 7th century, every one went to church bearing a taper, which was lighted at a fire kindled by the Bishop, apparently from the altar lights.

S. And why?

A. In memory of the Light of the World being then borne in the arms of Simeon and Anna—'the Light to lighten the Gentiles.' In the instructions for the people put forth in the latter years of

Henry VIII., we read, 'On Candlemas days it shall be declared that the bearing of candels is done in memorie of Christe, the Spirituall Lyghte, of Whom Simeon did prophecye, as it is read in the church that day'; and another old book on the festivals, likewise quoted in Brand's 'Popular Antiquities,' says, 'A candell is made of weke (wick) and waxe; so was Cryste's soul hyd within the manhode. Also the fyre betokeneth the Godhede; also it betokeneth our Ladie's moderhede and maidenhede lit with the fyre of love.' Apparently the custom went on in some places even after the Reformation. One of the complaints when Bishop Cosin was prosecuted in 1628 was that he 'busied himself from two of the clocke in the afternoon till foure, in climbing long ladders to stick up wax candles'—in Durham Cathedral, 220 in all, besides 16 torches, 60 of them about the High Altar. Even in 1790, Ripon Cathedral was lighted up on the Sunday before Candlemas Day. In the Roman Missal, the candles are distributed while the *Nunc Dimittis* is sung, with 'to be a Light to lighten the Gentiles' as an antiphon. This Collect then used has been kindly translated for me: 'O Lord Jesu Christ, the true Light which lighteneth every man that cometh into the world, pour Thy blessing on these candles, and hallow them by the light of Thy grace. Mercifully grant that as these lights, kindled by visible fire, dispel the darkness of the night, so our hearts, illuminated by the invisible fire which is the brightness of the Holy Spirit, may be freed from the blindness of all vices; that the eye of our mind being purified, we may be able to see those things which are pleasing to Thee, and profitable to our salvation; so that, after the dark perils of this world, we may be counted worthy to attain to the Light that never faileth, through Thee, O Christ, the Saviour of the world, Who livest, etc.' Here is a verse of a hymn, translated from Adam de St. Victor, for the Blessing of the Candles—

'As one, love to Jesus bearing,
In this festal custom sharing,
Doth a waxen taper hold.
So the Father's Word supernal,
Pledge of purity maternal,
Did old Simeon's arms enfold.'

Again—

'Saviour here, here, Mary lowly,
Holy Son and Mother holy,
Move us all to glad delight.
By that work of light perfected
Which we now, for prayer collected,
Image with our tapers bright.'

S. And were not the candles kept afterwards to be used on all sorts of occasions?

A. Yes; their light was thought to drive away Satan, and thus they were brought out in thunderstorms and around death-beds; and being thus treated by the ignorant as a charm, they were one of the first articles denounced by the Reformers.

S. And the candle was carried at Churchings in imitation of those at the Feast?

A. The emblem of Him who brought the great purifying. Herrick thus describes Churching—

> 'Burn first thine incense, when as thou seest
> The candid stole thrown o'er the pious priest,
> With reverend curtsies come, and to him bring
> Thy free (and not decurted) offering.'

S. Candid is white, I suppose, and not decurted—not cut short.

A. The mother was first to put on her 'holy filletings'—no doubt her veil. It must have been so entirely a matter of course in the time of Edward VI. that the rubric does not enjoin it; but the next revision commanded the mother to be decently veiled, and 'with a white covering.' Sometimes, as at St. Benet's, Gracechurch Street, a white damask covering was kept to be lent to poor women. The Bishop of Chichester inquired in 1638 whether the mothers came in a white veil or kerchief, and Puritan women were sometimes 'presented' for not doing so.

S. 'Slight tremblings only of her veil declare,
Soft answers duly whispered to each soothing prayer.'

A. The veil was so struggled against as a ceremony, that finally the rubric only bids the mother to be decently apparelled—meaning suitably—and leaves the mode to her own discretion.

S. And where was she bidden to kneel?

A. Originally, in the pre-Reformation days, by the church door, because it was admittance again; but in 1549, it was made 'in some convenient place, near to the Quire door.'

S. Convenient again meaning suitable or fit?

A. Then when the Holy Table stood in the body of the church, she knelt near it; but when the Altar was in the right place, Bishop Cosin wished to make the rubric, 'some convenient place appointed by the Minister before the Holy Table'; and thus the correct custom has come to be to kneel at the Altar-rail. The service in King Edward's first book is almost the same as the present, coming substantially from the Sarum use. But the Priest's address mentions that the child has received Baptism, and I suppose that was omitted in case of the child's being dead. The Psalm was the 121st.

S. Why was that changed?

A. I believe because the belief in protection by the candles was connected with the verse, 'So that the sun shall not burn thee by day, neither the moon by night.'

S. Well, that is strange; but the present Psalms are very appropriate.

A. They were chosen in 1661, and they give the opportunity of applying one either to the coming to the Holy Communion or to thanksgiving for the infant.

S. 'Like as the arrows in the hand of the giant, even so are the young children.' I remember a little book, lost long ago, called 'The Giant's Arrows,' with a set of excellent lessons on how children were to be swift and ready, and go straight to the mark, and never give cause for shame,' so 'as to be truly a heritage and gift that cometh of the Lord.'

A. There is the further suitability in this being a song of degrees—one of those for going up to the Temple. The 116th is a thanksgiving after sickness and distress. Bishop Wordsworth thinks it was Nehemiah's thanksgiving when delivered from the enemies who obstructed his great work; and if so, the cupbearer is thinking of a better cup than that which he handed to the Great King.

S. What cup would he mean?

A. That Passover cup of wine probably which the master of the feast handed round on the first evening.

S. That of which our Lord said, 'I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine until I drink it new with you.'

A. And now to us the verse means, indeed, the Cup of Salvation, the Blood of the New Testament. Remember, too, that this Psalm is part of the Great Hallel, the hymn sung at that first Eucharist before 'they went out to the Mount of Olives.'

S. Then comes the Lesser Litany, and the Lord's Prayer, with the Doxology, because it is a thanksgiving service. The Versicles are the same as those in the Visitation of the Sick, when we looked out the Psalms they came from.

A. The final prayer is closely translated from that in the Sarum Missal, only in Edward's first book it asked that the woman might walk in her vocation, and those words were afterwards left out. I do not know why, for surely it is a vocation to be mother of a family and head of a household.

S. Then she is to bring 'accustomed offerings.'

A. Not a fee to the clergyman, but an offering to God, as should be impressed upon her.

S. A continuation of the turtle-dove offering of the Israelite woman. In the book of 1549, 'the woman must offer her Crisom.' I am not sure if this means her baby, or the white Crisom cloth in which it was brought.

A. Brand says that at Dunlop, in Essex, the woman offered a white handkerchief in his time in which the child was brought to Baptism.

S. 'I will pay Thee my vows' is very appropriate to the offering. The rubric ends, 'And if there be a Communion, it is convenient that she receive the Holy Communion.'

A. Befitting that is! Alas, that so many mothers come without thought of that, treating Churching only as a franking for coming into public again. But still King James was right, it is a great thing to have a custom observed by even the most careless that

brings them to be prayed for, and to hear even a few holy words at a time when they may be thankful, softened, and impressible.

S. Why is it called Churching?

A. Perhaps as restoration to the privileges of the Church, but very possibly only adopting popular phraseology.

S. You mean, as the poor people call every service, Churching. 'Is there Churching to-day?' means with them, is there matins?

SIEGLINDE.

BY R. METCALFE.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE days that followed upon the baneful visit of the merchant and the mummers' conspiracy, which had proved so fatal to poor Hermann, and yet had issued in so hopeful an ending for him, were quiet, peaceful ones to Sieglinde. The sense of the great danger she had run, and the deliverance sent her, filled her with feelings of humble thankfulness and joy, and the hopeful death of Hermann—the one spot of light in the dark remembrance, remained as good out of the past evil. The snow that now spread its solemn stillness over everything was but an image of the deep peace which filled Sieglinde's soul. She looked not much before or after: when a great danger is past the sense of safety is enough; the rest after conflict, the peace after pain are deeper yet than joy—joy springs like the waves towards heaven, and catches broken lights; but peace holds heaven in its heart.

The snow in that country sometimes lies for many weeks; it was half a foot deep on the roads, and several feet in the drifts which the wind swept up over the plain. No strangers nor pilgrims came to the Castle, only the charcoal-burners from the forest, who flocked to the gate, in their rough sheep-skin mantles and wooden clogs, for their daily dole of soup or broken meat, and told how they kept the fires alight all the night to scare away the wolves, which, pressed by hunger, came down in packs from the mountains on their nightly prowling excursions. Sometimes Sieglinde carried little presents to these poor people, dainties to those who were sick, for there was great distress among them from the severe weather; there were about a hundred families scattered through the depths of the forest.

One afternoon, when the snow had lain on the ground about four weeks, Sieglinde filled a basket with some little delicacies for a poor woman, the wife of a charcoal-burner, who was lying ill, and wrapping herself in a warm cloak, set out alone towards the forest. The snow lay all around like a spotless, unrent garment; every mark of the landscape was hidden, except the forest trees which stood motionless, stretching out dark shadowy arms against the grey unbroken sky: the deep silence of the snow brooded over the earth that seeme

lying dead beneath its pall. There was not a movement or a sound of life, except that once a dark-winged bird passed overhead, flapping its way slowly homeward to the forest. The road, only tracked in the middle by the peasants' feet, led straight onward, and Sieglinde's footsteps fell soundlessly as she moved like a shadow through the whiteness. 'It is the hidden journey of the soul,' she thought to herself; 'in deep silence such as this it holds its way through life, alone with God.'

The charcoal-burner's hut, where the sick woman lay, stood in the first forest clearing; the snow here was broken by the branches, and not so deep as without; it had been trampled down and swept away round the smouldering charcoal fire in the midst. Two tiny children, who were pelting one another with the snow, caught sight of Sieglinde as she approached, and ran into the hut to give a joyful warning to their mother.

Within, the poor woman lay upon the rough bed, lonely and suffering. Sieglinde sat beside her for some time, giving what relief she was able to afford, and speaking comforting and cheering words. She was about to take her leave when the two little children ran in again, saying that a strange man was coming up to the door, and in another minute there was a quiet tap, and he entered the hut. It was a striking and venerable figure that met Sieglinde's glance: long white locks and a flowing beard made a silver frame for a pale finely-cut face, and eyes which met Sieglinde's with a gentle, inquiring look.

'I fear I intrude,' he said, bowing courteously; 'but necessity must be my excuse. Is there any one here who would be so kind and courteous as to direct us in our way through this forest to the nearest place of shelter and refreshment? We are a little company in much distress; a young knight has met with a misfortune; in treading these devious paths his horse stumbled with him and fell, and I fear he is injured somewhat severely; his sister also is in great anxiety, and we should be most thankful to be set in the road to some place where we might procure a night's rest, and such comforts as are needful for a suffering man.'

'There is a Castle not a mile from here,' said Sieglinde. 'I shall be very happy to offer you what shelter it affords, and to show you the way thither; but first, courteous sir, will you bring me to the place where these poor sufferers are, it will give me pleasure if I can be of any service to them.'

The distance to the next clearing was not great, for it was there that the stranger led Sieglinde. Before the door of one of the huts, three fine but tired-looking horses, one of them furnished with a side saddle, were held by two pages. As she stooped her head to enter the low doorway, a strange sight met Sieglinde's eyes. In a corner of the hut upon the heap of dried leaves which served the inmates of the hut as a bed, a young knight half reclined, seemingly in great

pain, for his face was pale and drawn, and his eyes closed. His dress was rich, carefully made in the fashion of the day; a short velvet cloak hung from his shoulders over a silk surcoat, embroidered with flowers and coat of arms, a cap with a long feather lay on the ground, and his long hair fell in disorder over his face. By his side knelt a young lady, who from her likeness to him in beautiful features and refined cast of countenance was evidently his sister, except that her eyes and hair were darker than his; her dress also was as costly, and her long silk robe swept the unaccustomed earthen floor of the hut, as she knelt there in the abandonment of her distress. As Sieglinde entered, she turned her beautiful face towards her with a look of wonder, but returned Sieglinde's low courtesy only by a careless nod.

'To this lady, madam,' said Sieglinde's venerable guide, 'by good fortune my steps have been directed; she is so good as to come to our assistance in this dilemma, and offers us the hospitality of her house which lies not far from here, as I understand.'

'I shall be very glad if I am able to offer you any help in my power,' added Sieglinde, going forward with ready sympathy.

'I beg your pardon—I did not understand at first—you are very good,' said the strange lady more graciously, for Sieglinde's dress was so plain beside her own that in her first careless glance she had taken her for a peasant woman. 'My brother has met with an accident in this horrible forest and broken his leg, which our good physician here has just set with splints from the trees, but any movement is agony to him. He ought to have a litter; what are we to do? Oh, that we had not lost our way in this dreadful snowy country!' she broke off in lamentation.

'My hurt is not much, Bertha,' said the young man, looking up for the first time; 'and as to the country, all we have to do is to get out of it as quickly as possible.'

'More easily said than done,' answered his sister; 'here you lie unable to move, or to mount a horse, and when we shall reach home I cannot even imagine.'

'I will send a litter and anything else that may be wanted at once,' interrupted Sieglinde. 'I hope you will not have long to wait. I will return home immediately.'

'And if you will do me the honour, gracious madam, of accepting your humble servant as your escort, I shall be most happy,' said the venerable man. 'And having the honour of being a votary of the divine art of healing, I may perchance be of use in advising the arrangement of the litter—provided that Mistress Bertha permits me to leave her,' he added, glancing towards the young lady.

A half-scornful smile flitted over her face as she turned her shoulder to him, muttering: 'Without doubt, Master Kurt can do no wrong.'

Sieglinde led the way to the door, and was soon retracing her steps along the snow-track with her companion.

'Ah! what uncertainty is there in the moods of youth,' he observed, when they had gone a few paces, alluding apparently to the young lady's last words. 'A humour now here, now there, wandering as the dryad's voice singing echo through the forest, changeful as the chameleon's colours—like the hours of an April day, or the shifting rainbow's hues, or anything that is most fleeting and unresting.'

'Certainly there is a charm in unrestful things,' answered Sieglinde, 'though I understand not how far that charm to us may lie in their sympathy with our own changeful spirits here. I suppose that here we grow weary of things because they cannot satisfy us; being themselves imperfect, they cannot reach to the measure of our souls, and so we find charm in their very changefulness; hereafter, where all is perfect——'

'Perfect repose! Behold it!' interrupted her companion, smiling gently, as he pointed to the white-sheeted landscape around them, now deepening in the coming twilight.

Sieglinde stopped for a moment to follow his gaze, and then pursued her road.

'That is death,' she said, 'and I speak of life.'

'But life by its very laws is but change and unrepose,' he said. 'We change, not only the passing moods of that subtle essence we call our soul—moods as variable as unaccountable, as delicate as the airs that blow through an Æolian harp, but also our bodies themselves perpetually passing through the transmutations of matter as they are, and tending towards decay, unless, indeed, they can be arrested by some principle of life of such force as to hold in check the counter forces of death; and this principle of endless life is the supreme good, the grand hope, the profound secret for which the wise are still in search, but which we know will one day yield to the magical "open sesame" of the divine mistress of minds and hearts.'

'And whom call you the divine mistress, physician?' asked Sieglinde.

'Even she who was the choice of the wise king, whose praises he celebrates so unweariedly,' answered her companion; 'she whose price is above rubies—she who holds the key of all secrets, for whom no height is too lofty, no depth too profound—wisdom, knowledge, science—she who alone can fill and satisfy the mind of man.'

As he spoke, the physician's face lighted up with such a gleam of enthusiasm that, looking upon it, Sieglinde's own face kindled in response.

'You seem, indeed, to have found that divine wisdom of which you speak, physician,' she said. 'As for me, I am but a seeker after it.'

'Ah!' said the physician, turning and smiling upon her, 'it might indeed be a pleasurable and profitable task to lead a bright young soul like yours, madam, along those paths of pleasantness. As for

Mistress Bertha, poor child, she cares for none of these things, being at present all engrossed by the allurements and phantom pleasures of the world; but her brother, the Count Rudolph, is an apt learner, though his tastes lie perhaps rather in the direction of the lighter and more graceful branches of learning than of those that are more profound.'

'This accident is very sad for him,' said Sieglinde; 'but we must be thankful that it befell him happily so near the Castle. We shall be able to give him here the care he needs, I trust; and meanwhile I will go and see that a litter is made ready with as little delay as possible, and do you, good physician, kindly help me with your wisdom in such matters.'

They had by this time reached the Castle. The physician looked up at the massive pile, with its frowning towers and battlemented walls, and said—

'Ah! a goodly pile forsooth, madam, and impregnable, I should say. It seems that men's dwellings are fortresses in this part of the country.'

'Alas! we have bold and cruel enemies around us,' answered Sieglinde.

'These stones look sufficiently grim to repel the boldest invader, however,' observed the physician, smiling, as he followed Sieglinde into the Castle.

CHAPTER IX.

When the young knight, Count Rudolph, was brought to the Castle, and the physician had examined his injuries, it was found that the limb had sustained a severe facture, which would necessitate a prolonged rest.

The young man fretted a good deal at this mishap, and the delay it must occasion, for it seemed that he and his sister had been on their way to their home, which lay a long way off, behind the low hills that bounded the horizon to the south of the Castle. By some mischance they had taken the wrong road, and found themselves in the bewildering defiles of the forest, where Count Rudolph's accident had still further enhanced their distress.

All this Mistress Bertha told to Sieglinde as she sat beside her, and Sieglinde plied her needle at the embroidery frame. Bertha did not work; she only sat still, watching Sieglinde, with her hands clasped listlessly in her lap, her beautiful discontented face bent forward to observe Sieglinde's stitches, and her long black hair falling loosely about her shoulders. In the adjoining room, which was the best guest-chamber that the Castle afforded, her brother lay dozing after a night of pain, for, notwithstanding the physician's care, inflammation had seized upon the broken limb, and caused him much suffering, which the poor young man bore but ill.

Bertha and Sieglinde were talking together in low tones, for the door was left a little open, in case Count Rudolph should want any thing.

'Yes, this delay is indeed most unfortunate,' Bertha was saying, 'although I am sure you understand how much I appreciate your kindness to poor Rudolph; but it is strange that such cross accidents should happen to one. As I was telling you, we were to have had some winter festivities when we reached Glücksland, if it had not been for this mishap, and Rudolph was to have given some fine boar-hunts, with dances each night for our guests; as it is, everything will have to be put off till the spring. Oh! I wish you could see our country in the spring-time; it is very pretty and smiling then. But you must come back with us when we leave this place, and pay us a visit. You would enjoy the gardens, which are full of flowers, for the climate is much warmer than here; and we always have some gaieties or other going on.'

Sieglinde looked up and smiled.

'I should like it,' she said; 'but I never leave the Castle, except with my lord when he is at home; and as I am expecting his return any day, I must not be away then.'

'How provoking that is!' said Bertha; 'but nevertheless I hope to persuade you differently, for our place is not so very far away, and a messenger would easily reach you there to apprise you, if it so happened that your lord should return suddenly. I should have so many things to show you which would delight you; we have visitors often staying with us—we would arrange new dances and masques for your amusement. You would hear our band of musicians play—people say they are the finest set of musicians in the country, they can perform all kinds of music, sweet and gay, which would charm you. We would arrange the dresses for the masques together;—do you like masques?'

'I have never seen any except those of the Christmas mummers who visit us at that season,' Sieglinde answered, and she could not repress a shudder as she spoke the words.

Bertha broke into a rippling laugh.

'My dear child! you may well shudder at the recollection of those uncouth creatures. I remember them well in my childhood's days before I knew anything of the world, and, of course, thought their heavy gambols and barbarous old carols exquisite. No, the masques I speak of are quite a different sort of affair; but you shall come and judge for yourself. Then, in the morning we will ride together—I am passionately fond of riding—I shall show you Satrap, my dear little Turkish horse which Rudolph gave me, fleet as the wind and fiery as wine, and we will ride over the country together. Oh! it will be charming, I have quite set my heart upon your coming to me. I have never had a sister. Would you not like to have me for a sister?' asked Bertha, smiling and bending towards Sieglinde.

Sieglinde looked up into the beautiful face, now bright and merry with her anticipatory visions of pleasure, and laughed too. 'Oh, yes, very much,' she said. She felt it was impossible not to love such a charming creature.

'Ah, naughty little one!' said Bertha, 'I never thought——' she stopped herself, blushing a little, and laughed again.

'How foolish I am; nothing but a silly chatterer! I was thinking of Rudolph. I quite forgot for a moment that you were already married. What a pity! But one cannot arrange the world exactly according to our tastes, more's the pity. I would have made a sweet world, full only of pleasure, and all things that are beautiful and delightful—no snow, no cold, no gloomy forests, and no broken legs!' —she broke off laughing. 'As things are now, I suppose it will be weeks before Rudolph is well enough to ride again with me, even if we get him home.'

'Does Master Kurt ride?' suggested Sieglinde.

'Ah, and no Master Kurts! I was going to say,' laughed Bertha, then lowering her voice, she added, 'I do not quite understand the man, and I never like what I cannot understand. I suppose he is too clever and learned for me; but Rudolph likes his dusty old books and his queer messes and experiments. I believe he is trying to find the philosopher's stone. Hush, we must not speak of that; but I only hope he may be successful, for they say it will cure all evils under the sun if it can be discovered, and make one live for ever young and fair, which I for one should enjoy above all things.'

'He must indeed be very learned,' said Sieglinde. 'Does he always live with you at home?'

'Oh no; he is quite a stranger comparatively. We only met him lately when on our travels in Italy. Ah! what a beautiful climate that is. We spent the autumn there, and it was at Bologna that we first saw this learned physician of ours; we went into the great school of medicine there, where he was giving a course of lectures to the students. There seemed to be a great concourse of them that day—such a thunder of clapping hands and stamping feet when he said anything they liked, which it seems is allowed there, but they were carried away by Master Kurt's eloquence. I could understand but little of what he said, as I do not care for those sort of subjects; but Rudolph said it was fine—all about the beginning of the world, and the creation of man, and the origin of evil spirits, and the Tree of Knowledge of which Adam ate, which he painted in glowing colours, but treated merely as a striking myth—an allegory, enfolding hidden meanings. And it appears that Adam did not really fall into sin as we have always been taught, you know, because human nature is naturally good with only a few bad tendencies, however they happened to come there—which he did not explain; but they may easily be got rid of, it seems, by knowledge and education, and polishing one's mind by refining pursuits, all of which

appeared to me very pleasant to believe, for in that case all the priests tell one—as I remember when I used to go to church—about fighting oneself is childish nonsense, as, indeed, I suspected before. However, I tell you this only by the way, for you must not take it for absolute truth that Master Kurt really meant all that, I may have become confused by his long words and learned terms, so don't look alarmed, orthodox little Sieglinde; and besides, some of those most impudent boys in the world distracted my attention from the lecture by calling afterwards for three cheers for the "beautiful stranger-lady," as they had the impertinence to call me; they seemed indeed a very wild set.'

'And how is it that Master Kurt comes to be with you?' said Sieglinde, who seemed interested in Bertha's talk of the physician.

'Why, that is what I was going to tell you. When the course of lectures was finished, Master Kurt, who it seems had observed Rudolph and me in the lecture-room, came to call upon us, and learning that we were presently returning home to Germany, which he much wished to re-visit, offered himself to us as a companion. We engaged him as travelling physician, little thinking that we should have need of him, and as I hold, it was a stupid thought of ours to provide for evils, for nothing in the world is more likely to bring them to pass. And for Master Kurt's skill and nostrums which poor Rudolph has such faith in, it seems to me that he is greater in the lecture-chair than at setting of bones, else how comes it that inflammation should have set in? Hush, was that Rudolph's voice?'

Low tones were heard from the adjoining chamber as of one wandering in sleep.

Bertha rose softly, and stood listening with a frightened look deepening on her face, which Sieglinde watched anxiously.

'Oh! look what fair crowns,' said Rudolph's voice. 'Bertha, Bertha! be quick and come.'

Bertha stole to the bedside. 'I am here, Rudolph,' she said, trembling. He was not sleeping, for his eyes were wide open, and his gaze strained forward as though he saw something invisible to others. He went on speaking eagerly, as to himself—

'Shining crowns of laurel, like those they place upon a poet's brow. Will they give me one? Shall I gain one? Come, oh, poet's crown! come, beautiful fame!'—he turned suddenly, and looked round the room as though searching for some one. 'The lady of the Castle—the Lady Sieglinde! Where is she? Tell her it is for her—tell her they bear her crown on the tips of their rainbow wings; nay, give it me, I will crown the fair lady myself with the shining immortal leaves. Ah! they are dust—dust—they are gone!' He opened his fingers as though he were letting dust fall through them, his face changed to an expression of horror and dismay, and he cried out in sudden fear: 'Why is it getting dark so soon? and the crowns were dust, and it grows dark—dim, shadowy, like the outer circle of Purgatory,

where the spirits bend for ever under their great stone weights. Master Kurt, Master Kurt!' his sudden call of terror rang shrilly through the room. Bertha and Sieglinde were by his side trying to soothe him, when at the same moment the door opened, and the physician stepped softly up to the bedside. At the sight of him, Count Rudolph sank back upon his pillow, and lay quite still, only his eyes fixed upon the physician with a mute, expectant look. Master Kurt held a small phial in his hand, which he stirred gently.

'Here is something that will do you good, as I hope, my young friend,' he said, bending over Rudolph; 'gold, pure gold beaten to dust, and mixed with dew from the cup of the lotus flower, with other ingredients gathered from healing herbs at the most favourable conjunctions of propitious planets—drink, and may the soft spirit of sleep lull thy soul in dreamless rest.'

The physician held the phial to Rudolph's lips, who drained it eagerly at a draught, and sinking back upon the pillow, in a moment seemed to fall into a deep sleep.

CHAPTER X.

Count Rudolph's convalescence was a long one, but not quite so tedious as he had feared, for when he was able to leave his room, his sister and Sieglinde devised amusements for him which made the hours pass less heavily. And to the snows had succeeded softer weather—the mild showers and hazy suns of February, when the trees began to take on a purple promise of buds, and the building rooks from the forest cawed loudly about the windy turrets of the Castle. Rudolph lay upon a little couch in a small room in one of the turrets which commanded a fine view of the plain to the south, bounded by the blue hills of Glücksland where his estate lay. And while the February sunshine came streaming through the windows, casting chequered crimson lights on the oaken floor, Bertha sat in the stone recess, and sang to Sieglinde's lute, on which she was no mean performer, and Count Rudolph's fine voice trolled out harmoniously in catch or madrigal. Sieglinde was enraptured with the songs which the brother and sister sang—many of them by heart, some written in cramped square-noted music, in which Sieglinde herself easily learnt a part, and some only trilled out on the spur of the moment—songs like those the birds sing when the heart and the nest are full—songs of life and love and happiness, with sweet refrains that went echoing on in her spirit like the music of spring.

But when sometimes Rudolph would break out into snatches of wild hunting or drinking songs, Sieglinde crept out of hearing, for they reminded her of those she had once sung for her father and his companions at the Wolf's Stronghold. But more often he sang gentler ditties—troubadour love-lays, or pastorals, with their soft

monotonous accompaniments on the lute, that sounded like a ceaseless murmur of the wind among the bents, where the sheep lay taking their noontide rest.

Rudolph had books too—partly his own, and partly belonging to the physician, and these Sieglinde delighted in looking at, and trying her powers of reading, with some help from Rudolph. As for Bertha, she could not read anything beyond a few phrases in her missal, nor did she care to learn; it was too much fatigue, she said. 'I know I am but a butterfly, Sieglinde,' she would say, 'and not clever like you and Rudolph; but for all that, butterflies have a very pleasant existence, methinks. Let me enjoy mine—while it lasts.'

So Rudolph and Sieglinde pored for many an hour over the books, the physician often joining them, and opening out such vistas of instruction and comment thereupon that Sieglinde felt more than ever how ignorant she was, and what great things men had discovered and taught, and disputed over through the long ages in that great world of knowledge, of which the physician seemed to hold the key.

Some of these books treated of the same subjects as those she had already begun to study with the priest Guido; but Sieglinde was often surprised to find from what a different point of view they seemed to look at the same subject, and though a little doubtful at first of what Guido would say to these novel theories, and far from acquiescent herself, she could not help growing interested, and laid her doubts to rest by observing that her mind was becoming enlarged by thus learning to look at things from two sides.

Sieglinde soon caught something of Rudolph's admiration of the physician; her wonder at his learning deepened each day; there seemed to be a halo of scholarship and philosophic gravity about him. When he talked of the books they read, he often wandered away into depths of abstruse knowledge and vague ideas; then his face would grow dreamy, and his brow tense; at other times his eye lighted up with the hidden fire of enthusiasm, and his words flowed in what seemed an endless stream. Words he let fall, too, of things to be known, too deep and hidden for the common paths of learning, hints of occult sciences, of influences of the stars and planets, and powers of the elements still but half understood, of strange combinations of substances that should one day yield startling results, some of which, as it would appear from hints which he let fall, he himself had almost touched—all this made a deep and mysterious impression on Sieglinde's mind, and opened her eyes day by day to the wonder of life. Compared with this wisdom, Guido's, which had seemed so profound before, now appeared dwarfed; the very mystery of the physician's talk had a charm which was exciting, and was but enhanced by the whispers that Rudolph let fall of Master Kurt's

having long lived in Arabia where he went to study medicine, and there mastered the secrets of occult knowledge, of which it would not be wise to speak more particularly. Guido's lessons were quite forsaken, and as Sieglinde no longer called for him to read with her, he was left alone in his little study with his books and writing.

Occasionally he met Sieglinde in the house, and would ask her with a smile when she was going to resume her reading; but she answered rather impatiently that she had no time so long as her visitors stayed; that they must be her first consideration according to Lord Agathos' laws of hospitality; when they were gone she should have time enough for study. And Guido did not know that she had taken up for the time another teacher, and what seemed a more fascinating knowledge than his own. He was naturally desirous of making a deeper acquaintance with so learned a man as the physician while he stayed at the Castle, and of talking with him on kindred pursuits; but from the first it seemed that the physician avoided the priest, pleaded close attendance on his patient, and even cut short a conversation one day in which their opinions had presently begun to clash, by a scarcely concealed expression of contempt for the Church, and for clerics in particular, after which Guido had quietly withdrawn himself.

It happened one day that Rudolph, lying upon his couch in the little turret-room, was turning over the pages of the 'Iliad,' now and then declaiming a few lines in a rough improvised translation—for he was something of a Greek scholar—and showing Sieglinde the quaint woodcuts scattered through the copy, which was an Italian one. Bertha sat in the window-recess basking in the sunbeams, and listlessly touching the strings of Sieglinde's lute.

'The Italians are far before us in the art of engraving,' said Rudolph; 'these are the work of Maso Finiguerra, the great Florentine engraver. I bought this copy from himself at Florence, where there are some fine workers. The Italians are born with the artistic instinct, like the Greeks before them; but then Italy is the natural home of art; that is the place to live in for all who love art and learning. I think we shall have to go, Bertha.'

'The land of beauty, and pleasure, and idleness! I shall be quite ready,' hummed Bertha from the window.

'Idleness, you lazy child! As if there were not plenty of prizes to be won in the world,' said Rudolph, stretching himself on his couch; then shaking back his hair from his handsome expressive face, he looked at Sieglinde, and said, 'I have such dreams of becoming famous one day—such vague, beautiful impressions that touch and draw me like unseen hands—vain dreams, perhaps!—yet they have haunted me from my boyhood. I have always been something of a votary of the Muses; but whether or not they will be propitious towards their adorer remains to be seen. Well, whether or not, I

always feel in my best moments that there is but one thing I should really care to have. Pleasure is all very well, and those are wise, no doubt, who get the most out of life—the Greeks taught us that, and they knew what life meant; but yet, after all, there must come an end some time, and then—Charon and the shades, and what is left? But if one has won a name——' He lay back still for a few moments. The twang of Bertha's lute-strings broke into the pause, and she began to sing—

'What hour, sweet, would'st remember?
Why, that dear hour you wore
Within your eyes the flower of love,
And, mad for joy, I toss'd the glove
To Count Gerhard, and swore
That death should win me—or I you—
Remember this, sweet eyes true-blue!
But not one hour before!'

Rudolph raised himself suddenly again on his elbow, and fixed his eyes earnestly on Sieglinde's face.

'Do you remember my dream, or vision, or whatever it was, Lady Sieglinde? The crown they carried was for you, you know. I saw the glittering golden laurel leaves; the rest was nonsense—it falling into dust, I mean—a haunting memory of something I had been reading, I fancy, in the Morte d'Arthur, about Sir Perceval's experience in seeking the Holy Grail—the effect, probably, of Master Kurt's potions; but the crown was yours, I felt so strangely sure of that. You love learning—in Italy women are as scholarly and highly cultured as men—there are lady-professors of logic and medicine, who lecture in their universities. Have you, too, never dreamed of winning fame?'

'I? Count Rudolph, I fear you do not know what a beginner I am,' said Sieglinde, smiling. 'It is true, learning has strong fascinations for me. I love what is great, and true, and beautiful; I love poetry especially; but as for fame——' She raised her eyes from the engravings which she was still turning over, and looked thoughtfully away through the window. 'I have sometimes wondered,' she went on, after a short silence, 'since you came here, and spoke of fame so much as the height and goal of a legitimate ambition, whether, if one possessed it, it would prove all you dream. Would it not begin to fall to dust in one's hands like your laurel wreath? In what would lie its worth—except, indeed, in laying it at the feet of some one else?'

Rudolph looked at her quickly; but something in the expression of the intent face checked the foolish, gallant speech that was on his lips, of which kind of speeches he had made her several lately; and he sank back again on his cushion.

'Ah, yes! that is a woman's view,' he said, rather pettishly. And why, pray, at the feet of some one else? Is not fame fair

enough to be won for her own sake, and glorious enough to satisfy one's most glorious hopes?'

'Remember this, sweet eyes true-blue!
But not one hour before!
But not one hour before,'

sang Bertha from the window.

'You are only speaking in parables,' said Sieglinde. 'Your goddess crowns you if you will; but it is with a hundred hands in the glare of the market-place, while your hearth is cold at home. She praises you; but it is with the loud clamour of a thousand tongues that flatter you and feed your vanity, and among them all there is not one that speaks to your deepest, your true self. *Satisfy?* No, never!' said Sieglinde, leaning forward, and resting her face on her hands. 'Can *anything* satisfy that is only done and won for self?'

'I don't know—why should one not be ambitious for self?' answered Rudolph slowly. 'It seems to me a very rightful and legitimate, even noble desire, this of leaving one's name linked to beautiful images of imagination and musical words of song—let us say—to be handed down, read, sung, and treasured as a priceless possession by unborn generations of men.'

Sieglinde did not reply at once; then she said—

'Yes, I agree with you. That is a fine and true ambition; but then the real satisfaction you picture would lie in the good given to men, not in the fame for oneself; it would still be the giving, not the having, that would make the joy. A poet is himself a gift, his beautiful words come of themselves, or rather from beyond himself. A true poet cannot help his fame; it must come, sooner or later, whether he will or no, for his gift is like a city set on a hill that cannot be hid; and if he feels that it *is* a gift from above, to be given forth again to his fellows, that is his true satisfaction, and not the mere applause of men, empty and changeable as the wind.'

'The wind is very pleasant at times, however,' retorted Rudolph, 'especially if it blows from the honey-laden south, and whatever you think, I cannot help feeling that to keep one's head above the common run of men on a pretty little pedestal of one's own, and come in for a few of the garlands and a nice white heifer or two, always ready to be sacrificed by the rest of the herd to anybody who seems a trifle above them—well, I for one should think it very pleasant, I must confess.'

'Oh! what learned subject are you two debating all this while?' trilled Bertha from the window.

'That death should win me—or I you—
Remember this, sweet eyes true-blue!
But not one hour before—
Ah! not one hour before.'

'Hark to Bertha,' exclaimed Rudolph again, 'you are both agreed, it

seems; women are all alike, nothing is worth anything in their eyes but love!'

'And sacrifice,' said Sieglinde in a low voice, as if to herself.

Rudolph raised himself on his elbow again and looked at her intently—

'Sacrifice? yes, that is a Christian word,' he said. 'The Greeks did not know much of it, although it is true they boast some examples—Alcestis, Prometheus, Antigone—but the notion did not permeate generally, it was the property only of the poets and patriots, not part of popular religion, rather its converse; but it is the very heart and soul of Christianity. Christianity has canonised the idea—made it adorable, to be bowed down before, chanted in hymns, or rather dirges of human suffering, hung with bleeding hearts, censed with costliest incense of sighs and tears; and what lies there beneath the splendid shrine after all, I wonder? Will it turn out to be anything more than the contents of some other shrines—a little dust of crumbling, saintly bones?'

Sieglinde's hands covered her face, and when she raised it she was pale as when the deepest chords are struck. 'Oh, that you could understand!' she said.

Rudolph, too, seemed moved out of his usual seemingly cynical calm. 'Oh, I know quite well what you would tell me!' he broke out passionately, 'that to understand one must first adore—first bring the knife and the wood for one's sacrifice, and I tell you truly, Lady Sieglinde, I *cannot;* but do not think that I cannot understand something of the idea. I grant there is more in it than dust—there is poetry—yes, grandeur. I grant that you adorers of Christ cannot do other than make it the very core of your religion. Christ! with the pierced Hands and Crown of Thorns. I can even feel what a strange power there must be in the creed if one were to yield oneself to it; but I tell you I cannot. He asks too much. There is another view of life—the view that takes things as it finds them, and makes the best of them. The world is a pleasant place after all, full of things to enjoy, things to see, things to learn, full enough, I think, for twenty lives! Why need we look beyond to ranges of vision that our eyes were never meant to strain into; why try to sound the depths below our human plummet-lines? You speak always of another life, a higher kind of life within this outer one, a circle within a circle—why not be satisfied with this? You worship sorrow, you idolise death, you blot all things with blood of sacrifices. I love life; life is glorious, and all that belongs to life, the clash of its weapons, and the thunder of its applause, and the love-music of its songs, the wonder and the passion, and the daring, and the glory of it. *Lose* this life, must I? *Hate* this life, must I? But why, when life itself is pouring the wine of joy through my veins, and knitting my sinews with the iron of strength? I am a son of life, not death; I am a child of this world, I know of none other. Nature's golden skies are my mother's smiles to

me. She laps me in her green valleys, nurtures me at her purple vineyards, steeps me with her balmy breath, lulls me with her deep lullabys, fires my soul with her mysterious whispers; when she calls I must go, I must do her imperious bidding, I must see, know, admire, enjoy—let me be, I am a Greek, and I cannot help it!'

He fell back again upon his cushion with sparkling eyes. The colour had surged over Sieglinde's face, dyeing even her neck as though with painful pulsations; she opened her lips as if to reply and could not. Bertha's fingers touched the lute strings like a bird that has a song trembling in its throat; it seemed she had heard the last part of Rudolph's speech, for her lips hovered in a smile; then she began to sing—

'The summer comes hither,
And hither and thither,
The birds flit, giddy for joy and song;
Dance the crownèd hours,
And cry to the flowers—
Live life! O life!
And all sweet things that to life belong.

Must the harsh winter come?
Then we'll straight hie us home;
Shut out the winds, love, that do us wrong;
No winter showers
Touch this love of ours,
Live love! O love!
Live life and love, or die with a song.'

The song had scarcely ended when Odilia entered the room to tell Sieglinde that a couple of poor pilgrims were in the Castle yard begging hospitality.

'Bring them in,' said Sieglinde; 'I will come and see them presently.'

'They are probably impostors, and still more probably very dirty,' remarked Rudolph. His passion had faded out, and given place to his more usual mood, real or assumed, of lazy indifference.

'I am bound to see them always; Lord Agathos wishes it,' said Sieglinde in a low voice, rising as she spoke.

'Possibly even to wash their feet?' pursued Rudolph.

Bertha laughed a laugh that grated on Sieglinde's ears; her sweet voice had grown suddenly harsh, her dainty dress had a rustle of scorn as she turned and bent over the lute and struck a vibrating chord.

Sieglinde grew white again to the lips as she faced them, a fierce sudden light of scorn leapt into her eyes.

'*Greek!* will you go in my stead?' she said to Rudolph.

'I? no, indeed, thank you; my creed includes nothing so unpleasant, nor indeed does it much recognise the existence of the unsavoury classes except as a necessary evil in life. It is my ardent wish that the needful work of the world could be accomplished in underground workshops, so that, Vulcanlike, the working herds

might be kept out of cognisance of one's five senses as far as possible. Do not look so scornful, Lady Sieglinde, or rather do so, if the humour pleases as well as it becomes you; I am not cruel, I assure you, I would throw them a holiday or two now and then, when they might come up to breathe the upper air as the fishes, and only imagine the immense boon to ourselves!'

Bertha clapped her hands, and broke into a peal of laughter—

'Rudolph the wise! I would I could applaud you as vociferously as Master Kurt's Bologna students did that learned philosopher,' she said.

Sieglinde threw a defiant look at them both; to Rudolph she said, with a low laugh as she swept past him to the door—

'How I rejoice that you are not—*my lord!*'

CHAPTER XI.

When Sieglinde reached the hall where pilgrims were received and entertained, she saw two poor decrepit old men, whose miserable half-starved appearance bore well out Rudolph's mocking conjectures. Never before had any pilgrim wayfarers seemed to Sieglinde so forlorn, so repulsive; never any service done for them so sternly revolting as at that moment. Their clothes hung in many-coloured tatters about their scarecrow limbs, their feet were sore with long marches, their bleared eyes sought Sieglinde's face with an inane stare—or rather the eyes of one of the poor creatures did, for the other was blind, and the first made up for this deficiency by a lame and bandaged foot. The only sign of their pilgrimage lay in their staffs, which were rudely cut in form of a cross; the lame beggar used his as a crutch.

Sieglinde stood before them, pale and stern-looking; a storm of conflicting feelings raged at her heart.

'Sit down,' she said abruptly; she was not used to speak so to pilgrims. 'Where do you come from? Are you going on pilgrimage to Wonne Land? We only entertain true pilgrims here.'

The pilgrim who enjoyed the use of his eyes stared at her as if ruminating upon her words, till Sieglinde began to think that idiotcy was included in his manifold claims to compassion. At last he began in a whining voice: 'Be you the good lady of this Castle? and for sure I know you be, by your sweet, compassionate heart, and a weary tramp we've had, a good seven miles this blessed day, I do assure you, lady; and me with a bad foot, lamed with a hatchet at tree-felling two year ago, and botched and ulcered ever since the unlucky day, it has, and never will be better again, as I'll show you this very minute, lady dear, when I get these wraps off it, by your good leave.'

He sat down on a bench, and began painfully to unroll the bundle of rags, while the other man took up the strain in a yet more plaintive key.

'Ay, ay! he's bad enough—bad enough belike; but after all what's a foot or two, more or less, when you've got the use of your own two blessed eyes? but to go fumbling and tumbling about the world like blind man in Buff, and lost the sight of them this five good year, come Lady's mass, through having them put out as a prisoner in the galleys at Tunis, and it's truth I'm telling you, lady—ah! *that's* something to make a talk on belike, and enough to make Saint Mary's sweet eyes water, and the rest of the blessed saints in heaven, let alone such a pitysome lady as you; and to have the smell of something good in our noses to crack our jaws over belike, is better than roses to mouths that haven't tasted a bite since yestereve.'

'You shall have something to eat presently,' said Sieglinde, breaking impatiently into the doleful, monotonous strain. 'Yes, that is very bad indeed,' she said.

She shuddered and sickened for a moment, for the other man had unwrapt his sore foot, which at least was genuine enough. Then they broke forth again in feeble chorus—

'Ay, I knew the sight would turn you a bit, lady, and so 'twould the biggest saint in heaven, if 'twere Saint John Baptist's own blessed self, by'r lady,' said the lame pilgrim triumphantly.

'Ay, ay—something to eat, she says, bless her,' chorused the blind man, 'and a blessed word 'tis for ears and maws that haven't tasted——'

Sieglinde had turned her head away for a moment. From the distant turret window Bertha's voice came floating in, dreamily trilling—

'Live life—O life! O life!
And all sweet things that to life belong. . . .'

The setting sun was slanting through the western cloister and through the hall windows, streaming full upon the fresco painted on the opposite wall. There was a Form hanging there upon a Cross; the sunlight laid a dusky beam of glory round the pale Face, and struck long rays of gold from the thorn-crown and from the pierced Hands and Feet; the dying eyes gazed sadly out.

'And so we thought, lady dear, seeing that things went so hard here with us both, we would set out on pilgrimage to Wonne Land,' the blind man went drawling on, 'and hearing tell how the lord of that country is mighty good to poor beggars that are hard up in the world, and how he'll take them in—ay! sores and all, eyes or no eyes, or feet either, for that matter——'

A serving-boy had brought in water and towels, and stood waiting. 'You can leave this to me,' said Sieglinde. There was a sort of pale passion in her face; she girded the towel around her, and casting herself before them on her knees, began to wash the pilgrims' feet.

'Nay, but this is beautiful, lady,' they said; and if there were painful tears of penitence mingled in the water that was so soothing to the footsore, they did not know it.

A little later in the evening Sieglinde went up to the eastern tower, before the sunset radiance had quite faded, with the hope that some glimpse of the country of Wonne Land might be vouchsafed her. It was long since she had had that vision now; indeed, it was the truth that she had not often taken the trouble to climb the tower to look for it, engrossed as she had been by the society and conversation of her guests.

But to-night, as a man dying of thirst craves a drop of water, she leaned upon the furthest parapet, straining her eyes eastwards. It seemed to her that she felt like Dives when he lifted up his eyes towards Lazarus in Abraham's bosom with longing unutterable. Surely some glimpse of those hills would flash out, if but for a moment to refresh her, and yet what vision of what country, however unearthly fair, could still her hunger to-night? Would she not see some messenger come riding swiftly across the plain to reward her and bring her gladness? But no, not even the whole glittering train of those silver knights did she crave to see, nor angels, nor gods, nor men, but only Lord Agathos' face. What did it matter that the crystal's whiteness was always dimmed now with reflections and colours, fleeting and variable as the hours of the day? He would set that right if he would but come. What did it matter that a strange coldness at the thought of his return, nay, even the thought of himself—an acquiescence in her present life with Bertha, and Rudolph, and the physician—seemed to have grown up in her of late! She recognised her lukewarmness now, and it pierced her like a sword. With speechless, repentant longing, she gazed eastwards and waited. There was nothing to be seen there but the soft, blurred evening mists, from which the last red touch of the vanished sun was fast dwindling, leaving them one dull grey sheet that spread itself slowly over the plain. The gloomy shadow of it touched her face as she gathered her cloak around her, and turned away. She was startled to see Master Kurt standing there, apparently watching the landscape also. She would rather have seen almost any one else just then; and besides, it was an unwarrantable intrusion. The tower was her special resort, and none other came there except the watchman Werner.

'I marvel how you found your way up here, physician,' said Sieglinde proudly, as she faced him.

The physician smiled. 'Ah, dear madam, was it possible to keep away, when I had heard what heavenly visions might be here beheld by eyes purged from the dross of earthly things? heavenly glimpses, such as the Hebrew prophets saw of old, or Eastern mystics, abstracted by prayer and mortifications from the earthliness of life?'

'Have you seen the Land to-night then, physician?' Sieglinde asked.

'Oh, most fairly madam!' he answered, 'a vision of delight indeed it is—heavenly mountains such as those the prophet Moses saw from Pisgah's top—a country most cloud-like and unreal-seeming.'

'And I saw nothing save grey mists,' said Sieglinde, as if to herself.

The shadow deepened on her face; every one but herself, as it seemed, might behold the heavenly vision; this surely must be, in some manner, Lord Agathos' fault.

'Indeed! and I in my turn cannot help marvelling that was so,' exclaimed the physician, 'for indeed, to tell you the truth, I fancied we were both enjoying that glorious consoling vision at the very same moment, and I feared to disturb your happy contemplations.'

Every word that the physician spoke seemed to Sieglinde like the prick of a delicate stiletto! Did he intend the pain? She scanned his face, but there was nothing there save his ordinary look of calm, grave benevolence. She stood motionless, leaning against the parapet with her eyes cast down to the ground. What did it signify that he saw her sadness? she thought wearily. The physician sighed gently once or twice as though in sympathy with her mood.

'We cannot understand why these cruel disappointments are permitted us,' he said at last, 'for cruel indeed they are, and must be to a loving trustful spirit, and often we cannot forbear wishing that the visions we long for could be summoned to us at our bidding—But what do I say? it is only those who possess the sacred key who are happy enough to know how to compass their desires.'

'And where is such a key as that to be found, indeed?' sighed Sieglinde.

The physician smiled. 'Nay, I do not speak in parables,' he said, 'but words of sober truth, however marvellous they may appear; but would you find that key you must labour long in the hidden mysterious mines of knowledge, you must expect many a hardship, patient vigils, and long midnight meditations; you must meet with many a weary failure and galling defeat, and yet pursue your way undaunted; yet what is anything worth that is not worth some suffering?'

'That is true, physician,' said Sieglinde. 'I have already won that knowledge; I think I could suffer—but in the end?'

'In the end, absolute success, triumphant fulfilment.'

Sieglinde was silent for a moment while the physician watched her; then she turned to him eagerly: 'Oh, physician, give me this key! I believe that you possess it. Teach me the secret, I will repay you to the utmost of my power, and I think I could be ready to do anything, endure anything almost, compatible with my duty, for such a good. What are your terms?'

'You are generous, Lady Sieglinde,' answered the physician. 'I am loath to put your tender steps into so rough a road, but your very name assures me you must be in the end "victorious," and perhaps after all, this pursuit may not be so difficult, at least to your generosity. My terms in the first instance, at all events, are very easy. You are attached to Mistress Bertha?'

'Nobody could help loving such a bright beautiful creature,' Sieglinde said.

'Well then, when she and the Count take leave of you, and press you to pay them in return a visit of courtesy and friendship, which I know they both have much at heart, you have only to accept their kind wishes; on the way to their home, which is in a charming part of the country, I understand, I shall be able to instruct you more particularly in my method of knowledge. Come, at least that is not hard?' he added, smiling.

Sieglinde had turned away her face as the physician spoke, and was looking thoughtfully out over the fast glooming landscape. The physician waited.

'I fear I cannot do that,' she said at last; 'could you not teach me while you are still here? I have had so much pleasure in your conversation, I think I should not be a very stubborn pupil.'

'May I ask your reason?' said the physician.

'My lord has forbidden me to stay away from the Castle in his absence on any pretext whatever,' answered Sieglinde hesitatingly.

'There must, doubtless, be exceptions to every rule,' said the physician meditatively. 'Far be it from me, dear lady, to persuade you in any way contrary to your lord's maxims, however unreasonable and stringent they may appear; but—a thought strikes me—could you be perfectly certain that instead of disapproving this plan, as you imagine, he were to sanction it, would that alter the case?'

'Certainly,' answered Sieglinde.

The physician passed his hand across his forehead in thought; at last he said: 'Your great kindness and hospitality, Lady Sieglinde, merits indeed some acknowledgment, and further, you have shown so intelligent an interest in the pursuit of learning, that I feel loath to deny you any opportunity of further enlightenment such as it is in my poor power to give, the possession of which I know would be indeed a source of the purest joy to you. If you will intrust your crystal to me for a few hours only, I shall dedicate this night to fasting, prayer, and vigil by way of preparation; to-morrow morning, when the sun is a span high above the horizon, come to the turret chamber, and if, as I trust, my prayers are answered, you will see within that crystal a sight that shall fill you soul with gladness unspeakable. You may bring Mistress Bertha and Rudolph also, who will assist you by their prayers, if it pleases you.'

But Sieglinde drew back. 'I never part with my crystal, physician,' she said.

'Not even for *this?*' said the physician; 'it will be as safe with me as in your most secret hiding-place. You may trust me, indeed—there is nothing to fear; I would not ask it but that it is over the crystal itself that my invocatory prayers must be uttered. There is nothing to fear, I repeat—and everything to hope.'

'What would it show me?' asked Sieglinde, hesitating still.

The physician stepped to her side and whispered. Sieglinde started, coloured, smiled, and taking the crystal from her forehead, laid it in his hand.

CHAPTER XII.

At sunrise the next morning, when the chaplain celebrated the Divine Service in the Castle chapel, Sieglinde was surprised to see Rudolph, who could now walk by the help of a stick, standing in the shadow of one of the pillars, apparently waiting for her as she left the chapel. There was an anxious expression on his face as he turned with her into the cloister; their little quarrel had blown over now, and they were good friends as ever.

'The spell will not work, Lady Sieglinde,' he whispered; 'Master Kurt told me all about it, and both Bertha and I are anxious for its success. Master Kurt has spent the whole night in vigil, and is still fasting. He says the failure, which is only partial, and may soon be overcome, is probably due to the presence of some alien spirit—some, mind not necessarily hostile, but unconsciously sceptical—so he explains it, and he traces this alien influence to your chaplain.'

'To Guido!' exclaimed Sieglinde, the uneasiness deepening in her face. Without the crystal on her brow she had a strange feeling of barreness and emptiness.

'I have told him nothing; it cannot be so,' she said.

'No, that may be; "*unconsciously* sceptical," he said,' repeated Rudolph; 'but he has no doubt at all of perfect success, and to your utmost satisfaction, if only Guido could be persuaded to leave the Castle for a few hours—till the sign is given in short. Do pray devise some plan for this, Lady Sieglinde; it would be a thousand pities, it seems to me, to throw away all Master Kurt's kind labours now; these experiments interest me intensely, and we shall all reap the benefits of this one.'

He spoke and looked eagerly, with a delicate flush upon his usually pale cheek. Sieglinde was about to reply, when some one came quickly along the cloister behind them, and turning, they were both startled to see Guido himself. He looked grave and sad, or Sieglinde fancied so.

'I am called away to one who is in danger of death,' he said. 'It is at the further side of the forest. I may not be able to return before night—too late for the evening prayer.'

'We must do without it then,' Rudolph said quickly, a but half-repressed tone of exultation in his voice.

'Farewell, daughter; may God bless and protect you,' Guido said, taking no notice of Rudolph's interruption; and, lifting up his hand in blessing over her, he hurried on. He had not looked at Rudolph.

'The gods are on their best behaviour it seems,' remarked Rudolph lightly. 'Is not this turn of good-luck exactly what was most proper for them to do us, and just what Master Kurt was desiring? Come now, Lady Sieglinde, come!' he went on, half taking Sieglinde's hand to hurry her, in his eagerness. 'I will wager anything

you like that we shall find Master Kurt in the glorious throes of the very act of achievement, and everything will be as favourable as heart could desire.'

'Is the sun a span high?' said Sieglinde, glancing nervously backwards over her shoulder as they passed along the cloister, Rudolph limping with the help of his stick as fast as he could.

'Oh, yes, higher! We must make haste before the mysterious influences begin to wane. Do not be alarmed, there is no need; I should not have allowed Master Kurt to try this thing if there had been any cause of dread for you'—and in the excitement of the moment Sieglinde had only time to remark in passing, but with a dull touch of fear, the gentle tones that came into his voice as he spoke. 'It is all very interesting, very mysterious, very wonderful,' he said. At least to-day he was not cynically disposed.

They climbed the stair and knocked at the door of the turret chamber. Bertha stood there waiting for them, finger on lip, and a half-awed, half-mischievous look in her eyes.

'Come in!' said the physician's voice.

The room was darkened, save for one chink between the thick curtains drawn across the high window, where a thin stream of light, concentrated, by being made to pass through a kind of funnel-shaped instrument, sloped down upon a small table covered with a white cloth, before which the physician was standing with his back turned to them. A long purple mantle, probably his doctor of medicine's robe, hung from his shoulders; his venerable white hair fell round the motionless lifted head. Sieglinde could not tell whether the passing likeness of some features of the scene to a celebration of the Divine Mysteries sent a thrill of awe or of repulsion through her mind—repulsion, because was not this a kind of desecration of holy associations? But she had no time for reflection. The physician began to speak, at first in a low murmur, of which Sieglinde could not catch a word; but, after a time, rising into a higher key, with plaintive, pleading, wailing tones. The language was very strange, probably Arabic, and the monotone rose and fell on two peculiar minor notes that struck upon the listener's ear, like the persistently-vibrated string of a musical instrument, producing after a while a feeling of nervous sensibility. All at once, when this monotonous strain had become an almost painful tension, his voice rose suddenly into a succession of loud and passionate petitions or adjurations extremely rapidly repeated, and ringing with painful intensity through the glimmering room. After a few moments his voice sank again as suddenly, and the physician moved to the left corner of the table, and murmured several words in a calmer manner. This he repeated at each corner of the table, in the centre of which as they could now see there stood a small curiously-wrought casket sparkling with gems. Finally, he took up his position on the furthermost side of the table from that on which

he had at first stood, intercepting the single ray of light, and facing his observers. They could now dimly see his face, which seemed to be very pale and strangely tense, the eyes open, but glazed and fixed. The only part of his body which moved were the hands, which he waved incessantly to and fro, their motion becoming slow and dreamy, or hurried and impassioned, according to the changes of his voice that now rose once more into piercing entreaty.

Bertha had sunk upon the floor, pale, with closed eyes. The supernatural dread had grown so strong that Sieglinde would have rushed from the chamber, but some yet stronger fascination held her to the spot, her eyes fixed upon the physician's face; and, as she gazed upon it, it seemed to fade, as it were, to a more indistinct and spiritual paleness, out of which the eyes glowed like living fires; even his long white locks seemed instinct with life, and began to raise themselves and wave as though blown by a sportive wind in the stillness of the room. His face glowed out of the darkness and faded back into it like some luminous spiritual substance, like yet unlike himself. A mist fell over Sieglinde's eyes, though yet she was aware that he held now a small golden rod in his hand, with which he drew a circle three times on the table round the casket, and then suddenly letting it fall, and, coming to a full stop in his chant, said all at once in his natural voice, 'Sieglinde.'

Rudolph seemed to step forward to take her by the hand, and lead her to the table. The physician lifted the casket-lid, and stepped on one side, so that the stream of light from the window fell within it, and there she saw, lying upon a small velvet cushion, her crystal.

'Do not take your eyes from it,' whispered the physician in her ear.

The silence was profound as she looked down into its clear depths, round which the ray of light seemed to play and glance like a halo. Deeper yet the silence, and still she gazed. There was no sound in the room, but the sound of her hurried breathing; then her face grew slowly rigid, her clasped hands tightened their hold, her eyes fixed in a trance-like gaze. Suddenly a wan smile came to her mouth; she fell to her knees with her hands stretched out upon the table before her. She had seen the face of Lord Agathos.

CHAPTER XIII.

When Sieglinde opened her eyes she was lying in her own room. The early morning sun was streaming into the window. She thought that Bertha was there twining some fresh flowers into a wreath. For some time she watched her dreamily, remembering nothing. Suddenly Bertha turned, and looked towards her.

'Oh, you are awake, Sieglinde? I am so glad,' she said. 'You will soon be well in the fresh air; it is such a beautiful morning for a long ride. I rose betimes, you see, and plucked these flowers to

make a wreath of triumph for you to twine round your horse's neck, for you are coming home with us to-day, you know.'

'To-day!' said Sieglinde, rising and twisting up her unbound hair, as if still in a trance. Mechanically she raised her hand to her forehead as if to feel for the crystal; but it was not there.

'Yes, of course. Did you not say so yesterday?' exclaimed Bertha.

'I do not remember,' said Sieglinde.

Bertha laughed.

'You have slept as long as the Sleeping Beauty, and forgotten everything; but when you fell asleep last evening Master Kurt gave orders that you were not to be disturbed.'

'Master Kurt!' echoed Sieglinde, dimly remembering.

'Oh, yes, never mind—do not let us talk of him. He put you into a trance, Sieglinde, and frightened me almost out of my wits with his mysteries. He is so clever—a great deal too clever for me, you know, I always told you so. I told Rudolph that I did not want him to come home with us, but I am not sure that Rudolph will part with him; however, you had your sign—we knew that, you looked so strange, though how you summoned courage to look into the casket I cannot imagine.'

'But what has happened since then?' Sieglinde interrupted, bewildered.

'Since, Sleeping Beauty? Why, a whole day and night, for it was yesterday you looked into the casket, and what you saw there, I suppose has stood you instead of food or drink, for you would touch nothing. Poor child, how hungry you must be! Shall I tell Odilia to bring you something to eat? However, you sang for hours together, sweet songs all about a beautiful enchanted country, and strange to say, it was Rudolph's and my home in Glücksland that you described to the very life, just as if you had lived there all your days, although you have never seen it, and you called it the Country of Promise instead of Pleasure—a name it has never borne,' laughed Bertha. 'However, you will soon see it and judge whether I have not told you the truth. Oh! I feel as blithe as a lark when I think of the gaieties we will have together, and all that I shall show you.'

'And what happened then?' Sieglinde asked again.

'Then—oh then—why, Rudolph knelt at your feet, foolish boy, and asked you if you would come with us, and you said, "To-morrow," and so I told the girls to make all ready for you, and I am all ready, even to my riding-hood, and the morning is as bright as a lark, and we are only waiting for you. I thought you would never wake, Sieglinde, and Master Kurt said a sudden waking might startle you, and do you some harm; but I will send orders now to have the horses saddled, if you please.'

While Bertha had been speaking Odilia had come into the room with wine and food for Sieglinde; but though they pressed her to eat, she only shook her head.

It seemed to her then that Odilia dressed her in her outdoor bravery and tied her riding-hood, into the riband of which Bertha had tied her wreath of spring flowers, and Emilia smiled and said—'Oh, madam, this is gay! we shall have you back as merry as a bird.' Still, as though in a trance, she heard the champing of the impatient horses in the Castle yard below, and once, just before the little cavalcade moved out of the Castle gates, she said—

'Guido—where is he? Is he not coming with us? I must bid him farewell.'

'He has not returned,' answered Rudolph, as he laid his hand upon her horse's rein, and led her out. The clatter of the horses' hoofs on the stones, the exchange of farewells, good wishes, and joyous shouts were in her ears in a confused murmur, as once more she turned to see the Castle gates closing behind them, as if in some strange dream from which she must soon wake. Presently the fresh morning air playing on her cheek and the exhilarating exercise revived her, and she became aware that Rudolph was riding beside her. He looked very happy, the flush of youth and returning health was on his face, his eyes shone with a new light of animation. On her other side rode Bertha, keeping up an incessant delighted chatter, and behind them came their little retinue of servants, among whom rode the physician. All around stretched the smiling country in the dazzling morning sunlight, and behind them the Castle, with its ramparts and towers, faded back into the blue mist.

At midday they rested beneath the shade of a belt of oak-trees, whose fresh young leaves spread a green veil above them, screening them from the sun, and Rudolph's servants unloaded the sumpter mules, and laid out refreshments on the grass. The noonday sun blazed all around, and the air shimmered in the blue hazy distance. Sieglinde stepped to the highest point of the knoll on which they were resting, and looked backward over the country.

'Can we not see my home from here?' she said.

'It is in the clouds,' answered Master Kurt, pointing to the small summer cloud rising over the farthest horizon line.

For the next two hours they rode through deep woods, shadowy with stooping boughs, and bright with breaks and enchanting glades, where the sunlight shed itself through the leaves like the still mellow light in the cloisters of some old abbey. On either hand was the mysterious hush of the woods, deepening with the depths of their darkness; the incense of flowers thickly strewing the ground rose up around, and out of the living silence broke the throbbing notes of unseen songsters answering one another, deep to deep.

Bertha had dropped behind and called the lively Odilia to her side; but even her chatter seemed to have grown subdued under the solemn influence of the forest. Rudolph rode beside Sieglinde; now and then he glanced at her, sometimes addressing a few words to her, but more often keeping long silences, which seemed full of

unuttered thoughts, unspoken but winged words—as the woods were of that mysterious power of life, unseen yet felt. Master Kurt, who had been riding of late beside the two, now fell behind, seemingly lost in his own thoughts.

'What power must there have been in that old religion of Greece!' Rudolph once observed to Sieglinde. 'Nothing less than the power of nature herself—the deep influences of scenes like this, which made the poets people them with a thousand spiritual presences; yet the nymphs, and fauns, and dryads are after all only the concrete forms of the resistless forces of nature that we hear speaking in her thousand voices to us, and our spirits hearken and respond to her as to the great mother of us all. Now, does not your Christian worship of One Man seem but a meagre thing beside this multiform, joyous worship, which laid hold of life on every side, and touched nature with a thousand loving hands, answering to her impulses with the response of a child's to it mother's heart? It did not place her under a ban, nor talk of fair creation as groaning and travailing in pain; no, rather it knelt in childlike worship at her feet, and received in return blessings from her bountiful hands. It did not nail them to a cross, and turn a sullen face upon her, bidding her be crucified—as though she ever could be! but she revenges herself on her persecutors, and comes down from her would-be cross more beautiful, more glorious than before, with a smile of scorn on her imperial brow. They would bind her with cords—the croaking, monkish Philistines! but she is too strong for them, she laughs them to scorn with the breath of her nostrils, and breaks their bonds like reeds from the brook. Hearken to her voice now! Is it true that she "groans," and does not rather sing out of the very depths of joy of her multitudinous life?'

'Yes, but ah! she does not always sing,' answered Sieglinde, 'no more then we do ourselves. She laughs to-day, but to-morrow the sudden tempest may sweep down and blot out the sunshine, and the peaceful woods become a very pandemonium of fury and howlings, that could not be if this earth were perfect as at first. No; you cannot deny there are discords that will crash in among all the harmonies; however we may try to stop our ears, there are strange contradictions, painful surprises, that will continually break in to disturb us, strive as we may to keep our eyes shut, and that are explicable only upon one hypothesis. The web is crossed, so long as we are here—concord and discord, good and evil, life and death; but we look for a new heavens and earth.'

Rudolph was silent for a few moments; then he said—

'Yet the discords do but make the concords more sweet and satisfying; the nay but makes the yea more complete—perhaps, indeed, is not meant to be "nay" at all, but only a letter of the "yea," that we cannot at present quite read aright. How *can* real evil be in a world created, as we both believe, by a perfectly beneficent Spirit?'

'That is but to ask,' said Sieglinde, with a sigh.

'Do not sigh, or if you must sigh, I will sigh in company,' said Rudolph; 'and so I shall have but to speak your name—why, it is like a sigh—Sieglinde!' He leaned towards her, laying his hand on her horse's bridle; his voice trembled.

'I hear the undertone always,' said Sieglinde, raising her earnest eyes to him. 'Nature is glorious and joyous, it is true; but she does not always sympathise with us. Nature is often hard upon us; she smiles and mocks us sometimes while we weep. Human nature sins, and suffers, and dies. We need some one who is willing to share with us, to suffer and die with us—ah yes! and for us.'

'Die!' exclaimed Rudolph passionately. 'Is there such a thing on earth as death for souls that understand each other? But you *will* not understand; you are for ever thinking of One Who died on a cross long centuries ago. Here is one who lives and breathes by your side; he is not very happy for all his fair talking. Have you no words —no thought for *him*? May he not live for you, Sieglinde?'

His voice had sunk almost to a whisper. Sieglinde lifted her eyes to his, and saw that they were full of tears. Her face changed to sudden pallor; she trembled like a stricken leaf.

In the surprise and revelation of the moment, no words would come to Sieglinde's lips; the crisis of the moment seemed also a paralysis of life. Only the woods above them seemed full of sudden sighs and lamentations; the sun sloping to the west began now to cast longer shadows among the gnarled and knotted tree-trunks, which seemed to form themselves into grotesque faces that leaned out upon the two as they rode by, and vanished as swiftly. Presently the trees grew more thin and scattered, the light broadened, and at last, and yet all at once, there broke upon their eyes one of the fairest sights of earth. Smiling hills swept gently away on all sides, broken here and there by rocks fringed with trees and thick undergrowth of waving bracken; and in the midst there rose the towers of a stately castle, surrounded by gardens, whose myriad flowers loaded the air with fragrance.

CHAPTER XIV.

The gates of the garden seemed made of gold, for they glittered dazzlingly in the sun; they stood wide open in hospitable invitation to all-comers. There was no gate-keeper or warder to say them nay; and Rudolph's and Sieglinde's tired horses took the path that led into the grounds unchallenged.

'There seems no one here except ourselves; the place looks as though it were made for us,' said Rudolph.

'I wonder if Bertha and Master Kurt, and our people, will follow us here straight,' said Sieglinde.

As they rode further, the gardens became full of melodious sounds,

—the songs of innumerable birds hidden in the groves, mingled with the plashing of waterfalls and fountains that tossed their silver showers high into the air, falling into marble basins fringed round with water-lilies and fern-fronds, most refreshing after the heat of the day Then suddenly they came upon an enchanted glade, where grew a rose garden, where the air was faint and heavy with the perfume of innumerable blooms, and full of exquisite sounds of music, that seemed to come they knew not whence or how, but rose and fell as though now close beside them, and now melting into far distances; but still they saw no one.

At last they reached the marble balustrade of the Castle, and rode into a courtyard, where a fountain played in the midst of the silent sunshine. At the entrance-door, which was flanked by pillars of coloured marble, and, like the garden gates, stood wide open, they alighted, and Rudolph looked round for some one to take their horses, when, at the same moment, a pretty golden-haired page boy came running down the steps, and sprang to the horses' bridles. Rudolph took Sieglinde's hand, and led her up the steps. A burst of soft, triumphant music greeted them, as they passed under the portico and entered a vast hall supported on clustered pillars, and lined with many-tinted marbles. On either side stood a line of fair-faced damsels, who turned smiling faces on Rudolph and Sieglinde, and scattered flowers before their feet as they came, saying, 'Welcome, welcome!' A long vista of halls and vestibules opened out one beyond the other, each only more beautiful than the last, the walls and floors covered with mosaics and exquisite arabesques, where birds and flowers entwined themselves in endless variety. Through these the two wandered admiringly.

To Sieglinde each vestibule was more dream-like than the last. She imagined that she heard Bertha's gay voice trilling through the echoing halls, and at each one they entered Sieglinde expected momentarily to see her smiling face and airy figure coming to greet them; but, always before them, and eluding them, the sweet voice drew her still further.

At length they reached an open courtyard, in the middle of which a fountain plashed about a porphery basin; slender pillars held up a long, arched portico of Moorish workmanship, whose mosaic tints, here and there touched by the wandering sunbeams, flashed like jewels. Star-faced flowers looked out all about, hanging from trellis and arch, and the air was laden with the scent of orange and oleander blossom from the gardens around. On one side of the portico, a troupe of musicians stood, who had been apparently waiting the entrance of Rudolph and Sieglinde; for as they seated themselves upon the richly-carpeted divan at the upper end of the hall, they saluted them in the Eastern manner, and, at a signal from the leader, began to sing a bridal chorus.

The strains were enchanting beyond anything of earth that

Sieglinde had ever heard, for the voices, exquisitely trained and melodious, rose and fell together in perfect harmony, and mingled with the soft fall of the fountain and the joyous warbling of the birds that flitted through the portico, to and fro the gardens. The dream-like impressions deepened upon Sieglinde's spirit like a spell while she listened, and Rudolph by her side watched her every look, and seemed to anticipate her slightest wish.

At last, while they sang, one of the performers rose and began to move slowly through the graceful figures of a dance; in a few moments she was joined by another, then by a third and fourth, while the music of the rest seemed to lead them in slow mazy movements across the mosaic floor which their feet scarcely seemed to touch, tossing high the while their tambourines which tinkled with little silver bells. Then, one of them, who was apparently the leading dancer, detached herself from the rest, and approaching nearer to Rudolph and Sieglinde, began to execute a single dance.

She was an extremely beautiful woman, with black flashing eyes and streaming hair dark as night, lit up with pearls. Her eyes were fixed upon Sieglinde as her twinkling jewelled feet described slow circles, each circle bringing her nearer and nearer, while she swung her tambourine backwards and forwards in rhythm to the kind of wailing chant into which her voice had fallen, and to which—following the inspiration of their leader, the other singers, who were now seated at some distance behind her, sang a kind of lullaby measure without any words, but with sounds so wonderfully soft that it seemed like music in a dream. At length, when the last circle of her dance had brought her directly opposite Sieglinde, she came to a sudden stop, leaning forward, but never pausing in her song, and as Sieglinde met her gaze, trying to read some message in the eloquent mournful eyes, she raised her arm, and tearing suddenly what Sieglinde had taken to be a green, coiled necklet from her throat, she flung it to the floor. Then, beginning to move in sinuous waves across the pavement, it lifted a glittering serpent crest, and the dancer, springing backward, raised her arm and pointed to the curtained archway by which they had entered, once again casting upon Sieglinde the eloquent, warning glance of her eyes, whilst the attention of Rudolph and the singers, whose chant had now quickened rapidly in ever-ascending crescendos, was fascinated by the serpent's movements.

The warning was not in vain. With a rapid answer of the eyes and a shudder as when one half-wakes from a dizzy nightmare, Sieglinde rose, unheeded by the rest, and gliding to the doorway, silently lifted, passed, and dropped the curtain behind her. Once upon its further side she fled as if for life through the same long splendid vista of rooms by which she had come so lately. A strange horror was upon her, for she had wakened now, and though still but half-awake, was possessed only by one thought of pressing terror—to escape. Flying through the vast halls which seemed so strangely

empty, guided here by a dimly-remembered fountain, and there by the cluster of a cornice, whose cupid heads seemed all alive to her with mocking laughter—with the fancied terror of pursuing footsteps on the echoing pavement in her ears, and fearful of every shadow in the interminable porticos on either hand—she reached at last a small vestibule that lay below a flight of marble steps. Like the rest, it was quite empty of living face or voice; but in the midst, upon a low pedestal, there stood a marble satyr, so living in its expression as to send her a thrill of startled fear. The face was so keen, so cunning, so satirically, horribly true to nature in its every line and curve; and yet, more terrible than any face with a human soul beneath it could well be. This face and figure she certainly had not passed before, and the next moment a great dread flashed upon her—she must have taken a wrong turning, and might wander for ever in those endless ways. There were two lofty arched entrances on either side of this little vestibule, besides that at the head of the steps by which she had come; but which way to take? As she stopped breathless, hearing her own heart-throbs in the sickening suspense, she shut her eyes from the watching satyr-face and fell upon her knees with a voiceless cry for help. Opening her eyes again, they were drawn as by a magnet to the statue, and she suddenly saw the gleam of a crimson jewel lying like a bloodstone upon the wrinkles of the forehead, and round the narrow, cunning head the band of a gold circlet was clasped. She thought that she, too, turned to marble as she gazed; then, with a strong effort, she stepped close to the creature and snatched the long-lost treasure from its brow. She had almost expected the marble hands to resist and seize her, the face to change to some new horror; but the grin was but an eternal mockery, though its expression seemed to deepen in hate as she stripped it of its strange ornament. She clutched the crystal to her heart as in a vice, and taking the right hand archway, resumed her rapid flight. Even in the same moment that she snatched the crystal, she fancied she heard the sound of a stealthy footstep behind her, but when she gained the archway she saw that there was but one more corridor to pass, and then a portico, and there at last—at last—the trees of the garden and the open sky.

CHAPTER XV.

THE fairy gardens lay all in shadow now, for the sunshine's magical smile had left them long before; but she had no time to notice this, or anything else, as she paused for a moment in suspense where two ways branched off—one to a rose-walk, whose arching clusters were hanging motionless in the sultry stillness, the other to a broad sward of velvety turf. She took this last, and as she did so, again thought she heard a stealthy footstep behind. She quickened her pace again, too terror-stricken to look back, and saw before her,

browsing quietly upon the grass, Kaiser, her own favourite horse, which, together with Rudolph's, the fair-haired page had tethered, as it seemed to her long hours ago. The saddle was upon his back, and the reins lay over his neck. Sieglinde stopped in her running, and approached the horse quietly that she might not startle him, saying, 'Kaiser, dear Kaiser!' He knew her voice, and lifting his head, neighed in answer. She patted his glossy neck with her trembling hand, and placing her foot in the stirrup, sprang into the saddle. Which way among all the devious ways of those gardens would lead her to the gates? She thought it safest to trust to Kaiser's instinct, and laying the reins on his neck, she bent down and whispered in his ear the word 'home.' The noble animal pricked his ears at the sound, lifted his head and started across the sward towards an avenue of cedars. The avenue was crossed by others of the same trees, stretching splendidly dark in long vistas on either hand; but Kaiser turned neither to right nor left, but held straight on down the central way. For some time there was no sound but the thud of his bounding hoofs on the soft turf, and then Sieglinde began to hear an echo of the sound, or else the tread of a second horse behind. Still not daring to look back, she bent to Kaiser's ear urging him forward, with the whisper of an endearing word, or the light touch of her hand on his neck. The dark cedar-branches spread in death-like stillness overhead, making it almost night with their shade; but far at the vista's end the daylight still glimmered, like a pale lode-star of hope beckoning her on. The sympathy of her terror seemed to have communicated itself to Kaiser, and he, too, seemed conscious of some presence behind them, or the darkness and dim shapes of the trees struck him with fear, for there was no need now for her impelling words. With broad, distended nostril and eye, and outstretched neck, he scarcely seemed to touch the ground with his hoofs, flakes of foam from his mouth flecking his quivering flanks. Would they reach that grey light before the pursuer? Yes, though the dull thud of his horse's hoofs sounded steadily nearer, he must be gaining upon them—but the darkness was nearly past, the last of the cedars stretched its black arms in vain, the light had broadened and brightened. It was here, and with a great bound Kaiser passed through the open gates with their gilded dragons scowling on either side, out into the twilight of the wide country beyond.

As they passed, a mocking voice behind cried—

'Halt, fair runaway Sieglinde! Little boots it to run from *me;* you had best surrender before breaking your horse's wind, and your own neck perhaps into the bargain.'

At the sound of this voice, Kaiser seemed to become mad with terror; he strained himself frantically to his topmost speed, his bloodshot eye gleamed, the flakes of foam flew backward, his mane streamed in the wind; Sieglinde's old training in horsemanship stood her now in good stead, but she could only hold her seat by letting

the reins fall and clutching her hands about his mane, for it was dangerous riding now. The ground was rough and uneven, broken by sandy-edged warrens, and strewn with ragged furze-bushes and bracken, that stood up here and there in dark clumps against the wan-faced sky; the cold twilight air rushed by them as they fled, full of the chill dews of the on-coming night. One of those scenes that awaken suddenly an indefinable sense of melancholy, touching either past or future with a hidden spiritual meaning, to which some subtle knowledge within us responds. The terror clutched Sieglinde's heart; crouching half dead, she seemed to have no life but Kaiser's, and her whole being was absorbed in the effort to hold on in the desperate race. She had before this managed to clasp the circlet round her head, and the crystal gleamed—a crimson spot, 'the colour of pain,' above the deathly paleness of her face. And then, with a sudden spur from his rider, the other horse, covered with blood and foam, drew alongside Kaiser, and they were racing neck and neck with the wind.

No need to glance at the mantled figure at her side, no need to meet the terrible gleam of those malignant eyes; as by a lightning stroke within her soul, in that supreme moment of dread she did not need to see, *she knew*—as drowning men know and understand—the Physician, the Merchant, Kuno—the deadly enemy of her lord and of her eternal life.

No sound on either side broke the dread silence except the panting of the horses' breath, and the striking of their fiery hoofs along the ground. Around them, the landscape stretched wide and shadowy, becoming, as it seemed, more desolate as each half-mile was passed. The character, too, of the country began to change; long reaches of marsh land began to appear, and the vapours rising up from them seemed to clutch with chilly hands the two flying horses and their riders, now hidden for a moment by a dip of the ground, and now rising again, black and strangely magnified against the pale horizon. Now and again a marsh bird rose startled from the fen, and flew away with a harsh cry and a beat of dark wings into the fog; beyond that, there seemed no living creature near them; it seemed as though they must ride for ever through the grey night. Through her extremity of terror a new fear took hold of Sieglinde—that his strength might fail Kaiser, and then it struck her that her terrible enemy's horse did not appear to be running his full speed as Kaiser was, and that although Kaiser's pace was very great, his companion seemed nevertheless to keep it with ease, and even to be holding, under his rider's hand, a certain cool reserve of strength. What would happen if her poor horse failed, keeping that terrible speed, before reaching home? And were they indeed nearing home? Those long stretches of oozy bog land into which they might flounder at any moment, those low, dark hills against the horizon, which seemed to be closing round them as they drew nearer, those patches of reeds

with their strange shuddering motion as the dank wind passed through them, the marsh birds that were the sole sign of life, and that looked like some dark creatures of evil as they hurried away into the night—the gloom, the desolation, the horror of this country deepened upon Sieglinde, and brought sudden courage out of her dread. Anger and scorn came to her aid; she turned her face towards the physician, and with a great effort broke the weird silence at last.

'This is not my way home—you have bewitched my horse with your diabolical magic. I command you to set me right.'

'Do not be alarmed, fair Lady Sieglinde,' the physician answered in a sneering voice; 'you are perfectly safe under my guidance, and in the right way, I assure you, if you will but trust me.'

'Trust you—*you!* do you think that I do not know you? Yes, at last, under all your cunning disguises—physician, merchant, wizard, Kuno, traitor, enemy of my lord!'

Her eyes turned upon him, and met the deep malignant gleam of his, which seemed to burn her through the darkness; she flashed back a hatred which would have been as intense as his own, could that have been possible; she felt that the crisis of her fate had come, and lifted her soul to God; in her extremity He could yet send her deliverance.

On the one hand there lay a reach of fen land, with a thick growth of osiers and tall, coarse rushes, over which the white mists wreathed and hung; on the other, a great stretch of the same open boggy country through which they had come, and the low dark hills drawing ever nearer.

Oh! would not God have pity upon her, and deliver her soul from the lion's jaws? With a sick intensity of longing, which all her errors and her wanderings made more intense, she longed for the right way, for the shelter of the home which her disobedience had led her to forsake, for some help, some sign of remembrance and succour from Agathos, her disobeyed lord.

'It is a good country, and a fair night for riding, though somewhat chill, is it not, Lady Sieglinde?' said the mocking voice beside her; 'but a welcome change from the gardens and all their flowers, which were becoming a little stifling, at least, *I* think so. And so you found your wonderful crystal again, after all, I see. I know something of that handsome marble creature whose brow you saw it adorning. What did he look like when you pilfered him of his fine possession—ha, ha! and, by the way, what will the young count say to this hasty flight of yours? Ha, ha!' The mocking laugh sounded more terrible still than words as it rang out.

'Oh, help me, help me!' broke from Sieglinde's white lips; the drops stood on her forehead like the dews of death itself.

'Help you! Yes, certainly; what help do you require? But you must not be alarmed, and so belie your fine name, Sieglinde; and it is of no use, for you cannot escape me now. You have gone too far, you have done everything you ought not to have done, you know—for-

saken your lord and master's home in the most craven way, which it was your duty to have guarded with your very life, and crowned all your disobedience by the basest infidelity; it is I who am the *traitor*, is it? Look at home, Sieglinde!'

Sieglinde sprang upright in the saddle and uttered a piercing cry: 'Agathos, Agathos! save me!'

The physician had drawn his horse beside hers while he spoke; his eyes close to hers, burned into her soul like accusing flames; his hand, strong and terrible, seemed laid upon hers. Were they the clinging mists at that awful moment that came and wrapt her round? or an unseen Hand, but one that she knew was pierced, that came and held her with an almighty strength, and drew her—where she could not tell, for there was nothing but darkness, blindness, and the chill mists.

* * * * * *

She was sensible, after a while, that she was no longer flying through the night; but lying still upon the ground, that her enemy was gone, and that some one's arms were holding her. Had she died then? and was this the vague shore of death? But the chill fogs were there still, and the osier beds wandered darkly away into the great distance. And was not this Kaiser, quietly browsing close at her side on the short coarse grass? But by the calm at her heart she knew that the conflict was over, her enemy was gone, and she was safe.

Much more she did not care to know at present, only that the arms which held her were strong, and for a while nothing broke the silence of her rest. The gloom of night, the damps of that dismal spot were round her still, but no enchanted gardens, no silken couch could have given her such rest, for her will was no longer her own, but God's.

Then suddenly a voice like a mother's lullaby, so low and sweet that it did not seem to break the silence, but rather mingled with it began to sing, and Sieglinde could hear each word distinctly—

'When the cross is borne,
And the thorns are worn,
And the flesh is torn:—
Then the hill-top gained,
And the height attained,
And the Peace unfeigned.

When the heart's best prize
On the altar lies
For the sacrifice:—
Then the answer given
Through the silence riven
By the Voice from Heaven.

When the life is lost,
And the heights are cross'd,
By the tempest-tossed:
Sharp the path untrod,
Where the tired feet plod,
Oh, the smile of God!'

Tears stole down Sieglinde's face from under her closed eyelids; could it be for her—the sinful, the disobedient, the unfaithful—this peace of which the voice sang? and had she indeed passed through the tempest, and climbed a little way of the sharp path? She longed to know whose voice it was she heard, and whose the arms which held her.

'Who are you, kind friend?' she said at last.

'One whom you drove from you once in fear and dread,' the voice answered instantly.

'I do not remember,' Sieglinde said.

'Think again—that Christmas night of the conflict, when the mummers came to the Castle, and your wicked enemy was there in the disguise of a merchant.'

The whole remembrance flashed upon Sieglinde with the sting of renewed repentance.

'Can it be that you are the strange wandering woman who gave me warning that night, and whom I, wretch that I was, permitted them to turn away from my door?'

'If you had not done so then, my child, perhaps you would not have been here to-night, for you know now who I am.' Then it flashed upon Sieglinde.

'You were the special messenger whom my lord promised to send me so long ago, woe to me!' said Sieglinde, clasping her hands. She remembered the chill shrinking that the woman's presence had inspired her with on that fatal night; but now she felt no terror.

'May I not see your face?' she whispered lowly, for she felt rather than saw that the figure was veiled still. Then the veil was thrown back, and Sieglinde saw, bending above her, no horrible phantom, but a tender face, with eyes sad indeed, but unutterably sweet.

Sieglinde could only gaze into the depths of those strange eyes, trying to fathom and to learn their patient secret. At last she said—

'May I know your name?'

'My name is Sorrow,' was the low answer, as she hushed Sieglinde to her breast like a wearied child. Sieglinde thought they were like her mother's arms.

CHAPTER XVI.

How many were the days which followed Sieglinde's return to the Castle, one can scarcely tell, for there is no record. And the days that follow each other in peaceful order leave no trace behind them like those which mark and sear our lives with the lines of struggle and pain.

For Sieglinde had regained the shelter of her home, and peace beyond all that she had dared to hope, beyond all the deserts of her disloyalty and disobedience. Her friend—now no longer a stranger

—led her back, and with what a swelling heart she saw once more the grey towers of her forsaken home rise above the plain, and found that all within was safe, thanks to her trusty Werner, and the vigilance of her retainers, more faithful than their mistress.

Many days Sieglinde lived there, too happy in her old duties, in ordering her household, in relieving the wants of the pilgrims, and in loving preparation for Agathos' return, to desire to wander again.

Many suns rose and set, but her impatience seemed now to have disappeared; the rest seemed more anxious for their lord's coming than she. Her saintly father Guido sighed sometimes, but Sieglinde only smiled like one who possessed some happy secret. Had she received some message from Lord Agathos? Sometimes Guido could not help watching her anxiously, for some mysterious change seemed growing upon her, some change like that which steals over a landscape when the glow and joy of day fades, and give place to the stiller beauty of the moonlight and shadows of night.

She stole about the Castle, like a shadow herself, and yet with always the same look and smile of peace. Guido saw, with a mixture of gladness and fear, for the chilly autumn winds had come again, and the birds passed overhead southward in thick flocks, darkening the sky as they went, and boding another severe winter.

There was a little song that Sieglinde often sang in these days, when she watched, at sunrise or sunset, from the eastern tower—

'O Land! so very far away,
Whose hills in fadeless light lie hapt,
Across these wastes, by shadows wrapt,
Mine eyes look toward thee all the day.

O Love! so far, and yet so near,
Thy love is round me like a shield,
To thee for aye my heart is seal'd,
And all thy will for me is dear.'

One day that Guido was sitting among his books and manuscripts, there came Sieglinde's low tap at the door, and as he lifted his head she stood before him, looking at him with clasped hands. The daylight was waning, but there was yet enough to see that there was something remarkable in her face which struck him; there was a light shining in her wide eyes, as though some inward fire were burning there. She did not speak until he said—

'Well, my child?'

'I must leave you, dear Father,' said Sieglinde; 'I am going to my lord.'

'You have had a message then?' Guido said.

'Yes,' she answered, smiling; 'and I am to go at once. You will go some way with me upon the road, will you not?'

'As far as I can do so, my daughter; but the end must be travelled alone.'

It was an autumn morning, when the little party rode out from

the Castle. The mists lay over the distant hills and the river, and the pure purple lights of morning shed a radiance over them, though the sun was hidden behind a veil; the road lay straight away across the level plain as far as the eye could see; the grey expanse seemed only broken by flights of starlings that wheeled in wide circles overhead, losing themselves in the mist; the brown woods, half dismantled of their leaves, stretched away into the sky, melting into shadowy purple.

Sieglinde rode on her faithful Kaiser, beside Guido, who, with his head bent down, seemed lost in silent thought. Sieglinde's eyes were fixed on the most distant point of the horizon, as though they sought to pierce through the mists, and be at her journey's end. Behind them rode a few of her most faithful servants, amongst them Odilia and the old warder, Werner. They travelled thus all that day, Guido sometimes speaking heavenly words of faith and hope to Sieglinde, and she giving him her parting messages and wishes.

Among other things, she said: 'Father, we have not seen the last of Rudolph and Bertha. Ah, poor Rudolph! You will, I feel sure, see them again one day, though I shall not; and if they ever come as pilgrims to the Castle, pray let them be entertained with all possible honour and kindness, and say to them from me that, on this day, when I go to my lord, I thought of them, and shall look on toward meeting them again one day in joy and peace in Wonne-Land.'

She also said: 'Like these mists the things of this present life loom round us, and appear gigantic to our eyes, so that we cannot see the true proportion of invisible things, which are yet close to us all the while, in their truth and beauty. And oh, my Father! how often have they held my weak eyes, so that I almost let go all faith in the eternal things beyond, and had it not been for your help, should perhaps have altogether lost my way in the fogs.'

And Guido answered: 'That is all past now, dear daughter; faith itself shall be lost in sight.'

They rested at mid-day upon a delightful sward, where the birds were singing with clear melodious notes in the trees; the sun, gleaming through the mists, bathed everything in golden light, and Sieglinde's face itself seemed to shine.

'Let us press on, for I am in haste,' she said; and so they rode forward. 'The mists have passed,' she said. 'Oh, how beautiful the sun is, and how clear the light! and by it I shall see my Lord's face.' And she pressed on so eagerly that the rest were left behind.

The road now ran along a lofty piece of moorland, broken by boulders and great stones, that looked as though they had been broken from the rocks by giants who had passed that way, and left them there to mark their footsteps. The sun was so bright that the heather shone like crimson banners, waving amidst the rocks; and then there broke upon the travellers' happy eyes the blue hills and

peaks of Wonne Land, which seemed now almost near, for they could even make out the towers and spires of Lord Agathos' Castle, glittering like shafts of light in the sun.

Between it and them, however, there lay in reality a great and wide valley, into which the road began slowly to descend, and when they were down, the rocks shut out all the sun, which was now drawing near its setting. In the valley, too, the evening mists were rising quickly, touching all things with chilly fingers, so that the travellers shivered, and drew their cloaks closer round them. The view of Wonne Land was quite gone now, and nothing could be seen but on the one hand the grim dark rocks, which became still higher as the road descended, and on the other, the dim grey valley, stretching away into night.

Sieglinde had ridden forward alone for some distance; her face was set towards the valley's misty expanse. Now she faltered, and came to a standstill, for the road still wound its rough, steep course downward.

'It is so dark here, I can scarce see you,' she said to Guido, who came up to her side. She turned to him trembling. 'Father, I am afraid.'

'"I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me,"' Guido answered, as, taking her hand, he guided her through the darkest depth of the valley.

Before them lay a wide marshy expanse, where nothing could be seen but here and there the shadowy forms of osiers and clumps of reeds, rising from out the wreathing fogs, which here were so dense as to be almost suffocating. Strange cries, like the voices of night-birds wheeling overhead, could be heard every now and then, suddenly piercing the silence, which seemed deep and mysterious as death. Riding became here very difficult, for their horses stumbled at every step, and shivered as if with fear. Sieglinde spoke no word, only Guido heard her sigh now and then.

'Courage, courage, dear daughter,' he said. His voice sounded strange in the stillness, speaking now a verse of Scripture, and now her lord's name, to cheer her spirit.

Deeper, deeper they went into the darkness, slower at every step, until at last there was heard a sound like the ring of spurs approaching, and the next moment they saw coming forth from the fog a tall figure on foot in the white armour of Lord Agathos' knights. He drew near to Sieglinde, and spoke to her in a low tone. Sieglinde turned to Guido and the rest, who had come up. 'I must say farewell here,' she said. 'My Lord orders me to go the rest of the way on foot, as is fitting my unworthiness; but this good knight will guide me. Is my Lord very far away?' she inquired of the knight.

'Not so far perhaps as you think,' he answered with a smile that seemed to light up for a moment the gloomy spot where they stood.

Then kneeling on the ground at Guido's feet, 'I thank you, Father,' Sieglinde said, 'for all your help and care for my soul; and I beseech your forgiveness for the pain that I have caused you to bear through my waywardness, and your blessing.'

The holy priest lifted his hands over her for the last time, and blessed her solemnly; and then she bid farewell to each of her servants, who were weeping, and last of all she turned to the knight and gave him her hand, for it was now dark. They could but just see her face, which seemed like a pale shadow, yet eagerly hoping; and so like a shadow she glided away from them into the great darkness. For a little while they watched the flutter of her garments and the gleam of the knight's white armour, and then they saw no more, but stood still, trying to pierce the night, with the icy breath of the fog upon their faces. They saw nothing; yet it seemed to them that there was One waiting there in the darkness nearer to them than they had thought, for as they stood gazing, there came to them a cry as of one in sudden rapture or ecstasy, and they thought it was Sieglinde's voice when she saw, and fell at her lord's feet.

And this comforted them; and when at last they turned to go, they saw that Guido's face was rapt, for he only had caught the sound of the song which the knights sing with clash of swords and shouting, when they welcome one home to Wonne Land—

'Finished the fight!
The struggle and pain,
The enemy slain,
For ever;—
The day follows night,
The sower is reaping
Her joy after weeping,
For ever, for ever!

Ended the way;
The fainting and fall,
The wormwood and gall,
For ever;—
Dawn, O golden Day
Of an endless while,
And the Bridegroom's smile,
For ever, for ever!'

God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

DEBATABLE GROUND.

Should custom and conventionality rule the lives of women, or no? Has Mrs. Grundy a beneficial influence?

Mrs. Grundy is, on the whole, surprisingly popular. Chelsea China considers her in this western world a changeable old lady, constantly modified for evil and for good by those who defy her. She rather wonders that no one has had a good fling at her. Very few have recognised that she may encourage as well as repress evil. On which side was she in the evil days of the Regency? Where, alas! in some circles is she now?

Look at India, where she has reigned supreme for centuries. What is it but Mrs. Grundy grown to a Begum, who rules the lives of Indian widows now?

Leonora, strongly in favour of Mrs. Grundy, who, she says, has 'moved with the times.' (Who have moved her—those who obeyed, or those who defied her?)

Matilda thinks 'our social laws and customs served our forefathers—why should we pretend to know better than our forefathers? They were governed by them, why not we?' (How about Undine's woad?)

Tre Pol and Pen writes a good paper on the sort of follies committed by girls, who wish to be thought unconventional. But if the public opinion of a 'set' *is* in favour of such license, it is rather hard to say on which side is the special Mrs. Grundy.

Bournemouth Beetle thinks that though custom and conventionality are not infallible, there are few such valuable guides to the young and inexperienced.

Harrie speaks well of the protection afforded by the rules of society, as a standard of appeal to young ladies placed in difficult and responsible situations, both as giving a comfortable sense of correctness, and as steering them through social difficulties. This is quite true.

Dorigen thinks Mrs. Grundy a great assistance to people who cannot do without her.

Elcaam, in a very good paper, recognises the fact that Mrs. Grundy can rule for evil as well as for good; but thinks that conventionality is quite necessary to the organisation of society, and thinks it valuable as tending to oneness, and therefore to love and sympathy. This is

quite a new idea to Chelsea China, who would like to see it rather more worked out.

Lamda, a very good and moderate paper, distinguishing between small things and great.

Unconventional thinks that at the present day, when progress is easy and certain, Mrs. Grundy, though an inferior goddess, may act as a useful check.

Spinning Jenny, though arguing for a reasonable obedience, is on the side of the 'ages,' and thinks that if a woman desires her life to be useful and beneficial, she should be ruled by custom and conventionality.

Rudge perceives that as the world moves onwards customs change and advance. Mrs. Grundy alters, and she adds: Let us discover to ourselves our true motive before we break through time-honoured conventionalities. Let us ask ourselves whether we do it to be remarkable, or because we think it right. If the latter, we may be sure courage and strength will be given us to brave the world's opinions; if the former, we may find that in refusing the guidance of conventionality, we have lost our way.

'The following assertion of Emerson's is a safe maxim—

"What I must do is all that concerns me, not what people think."'

Alicia.—Dear, excellent, much-maligned Mrs. Grundy! May I seize the present occasion to lay a slight tribute of affection at your feet. I was just stepping forward when I heard a kind of gasp, and saw a sweet pretty girl standing beside me, 'Mrs. Grundy, but she is so very uninteresting!' 'Yes, just as uninteresting as the Ancient Roman or the Modern Englishman (whom she most resembles), for all three are *Road-makers.* Just think what we owe to the people who have made communication safe, swift, and easy by road or rail.'

Undine.—It is the good green wood in late autumn, a north-easterly gale is blowing, and the oak leaves are scattering fast. Piles of acorns lie on the ground. An Ancient Briton, becomingly attired in a coating of brilliant blue woad, but otherwise unprotected from the cold, is contemplating a wolf skin at his feet. A friend, also blue as the skies of Italy, sits on a fallen log beside him.

First A. B.—'The wind is cold. That slain beast did not feel it. Ha! why should not *I too* wear a coat?' (seizes the wolf skin and wraps it gracefully round him). 'Ha—ha—ha! The wind may blow, I am warm!'

Second A. B.—'Degenerate chieftain! When did a warrior care to protect himself from the cold. Coward! How, thus disfigured, can you appear on the battle-field! Woman! what maiden will be wooed by a creature thus disguised? Our fathers wore woad—and woad alone—it is our covering of a hero? Are you a wild beast, or a leopard, that you have only the only [illegible] girl?'

First A. B., after a moment of painful doubt.—'Hang the custom, and bother the maidens, I'll risk it!'

(Stalks off in his new-fangled cloak, while his conservative friend consoles himself with a meal of raw acorns, and reflects on the degeneracy of modern times. But the next time he went to a gathering of his tribe, one frosty day in December, he found that wolf skins had become the fashion!)

Paper Knife.—Is Mrs. Grundy of use? *Yes;* for her teachings are not very clever, nor always very kind, but till better can be put in their place, they are often a substitute for principle, and an anticipation of experience. The old story of Rachel's training is precisely to the point. Using too much gesture in recitation the girl's hands were tied, till her excitement broke the bonds. 'You *may* be free, because now you *must!*' were in effect her teacher's words. The same in life—conventionalities are restaints on social awkwardness, only to be cast off when there *must* be freedom, then the inner zeal breaks out into superbly natural expression. Conventionalities should be consciously known before it is safe to cast them off. They are the symbols of certain social hindrances to bad manners and morals on which it is not expedient for every one to reason afresh, nor do they profess more than to ease the friction of everyday life. Hence, whilst not mistaking Conventionality for her superiors, the average mortal will do well to remain within her tutelage in default of wider experience; and also it is clear that she has a power of advance, and that even the average mortal may advance with her from day to day.

Lucciola.—We define conventionality as the unwritten law of good society, formulated gradually, varying with degrees of social progress, but accepted by common consent, as helping to regulate the minor morals which escape larger codes. Every corporate body has conventionalisms and would fall to pieces without them. Our answer to the question is an affirmative absolute. We cannot lay down general rules for exceptional cases, each must be met and dealt with on its own merits. It is usually urged on the negative side, that good will be left undone, and evil often flourish, from a cowardly fear of Mrs. Grundy's tongue. This is part of the cry of our time, that woman is to be enfranchised from some fancied slaving of the past—that she has been too long treated as a cypher. So she is—to life's great reckoning as the cypher to arithmetic—one without whom the sum cannot possibly be worked. But her value depends on her place at man's *right* hand; alone, or on the wrong side of the integer, she is valueless. Mr. Ruskin has brought out the principles of convention in Art in a way that should equally help us in common life. 'You can't,' he says, 'have noble Art without conventionalism. What is beautiful in the wild woods will not necessarily be so on the temple-walls, unless the artist knows how to conventionalise; you do not fetter or enslave by bringing beauty

into obedience to law.' Among natural objects he instances vine-leaves, and gives in one of his exquisite drawings from Venice an example of what he terms, 'vine-leaves in service.' He marks the decadence of art, when in the Renaissance the individual will was suffered to turn the perfect freedom of noble service into the unchartered freedom of license and excess. The very spirit of artistic creation died out, as men forgot the principle of artistic obedience. Will not Mr. Ruskin's teaching apply to all unwritten laws of taste and fitness which check individual will? Granted that conventionality must exist, is the would-be law-breaker the best judge of its utility? The Apostle who, of all others, taught the 'woman-cypher' of Christendom to attain her full value on the *right* side of the integer, asks us not to let our good be evil spoken of—to give none offence in anything that the ministry be not blamed. Conventionality must be the rule, its defiance the very rare exception, in a woman's life. Mrs. Grundy may be a tiresome old lady, but we have a fellow-feeling for the class. If even a dumb ass might rebuke the madness of a prophet, may not she (or we) rank with Balaam's ass in warning people off a dangerous road? We claim no more for Mrs. Grundy.

Pellegrina.—Custom, or what has been the usual conduct under given circumstances; conventionality, or the social agreements of the civilisation of the period, should certainly influence the life of woman, and of man also, in any wholesome society; and so far as Mrs. Grundy expresses the public opinion of such a society, she also is entitled to respect.

But this *influence* (a term I prefer to *rule* as less liable to be misunderstood) is subject to various limitations.

Custom and conventionality are the expressions of civilisation at the point at which we stand, and are always altering. Society is a living corporate body, and change, either of growth or decay, is always active in it. What is usual, and agreed upon is, in healthy society, becoming enlarged towards a broader life, which expands unusual excellence into the general custom, and that in time into a better form—

'Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.'

Persons who live keenly, who have strong characters, though they may instinctively avoid collision with rules, are often outgrowing them and influencing others in the same direction, and thus society progresses and customs differ in each generation. But real originality is a positive quality, inferring strength in great matters; and is not shown in a meaningless defiance of rules, which is rather the mark of a childish or a dull character.

Again, 'Nice customs curtsey to great kings.' No custom is more important than its origin. They must yield to great emergencies also.

Further, the *qu'en dira t'on* should be an influence, but must never be a tyrant, and should not be too eagerly listened for. Also we should avoid yielding to unreasonable customs—it is with 'fools' that

> 'Custom more than reason rules:
> And where Reason should be law,
> Fashion—Customs, slight as straw,
> Stronger chains on them impose,
> Bonds more binding far than those,
> Tyrants since the world began
> Laid upon their fellow-man.'

Spermologos.—Mrs. Grundy is a useful censor in things indifferent, but no further. She is quite competent to decide what things a woman can do without making herself conspicuous, and as long as there is no right or wrong in the actual habit, the duties of meekness and modesty require that remark should not be courted one way or the other. But the instant the indifferent is passed, we must go to a higher tribunal than Mrs. Grundy, or she will either lead us into evil, or paralyse us for good.

On the other hand, Mrs. Grundy, i.e. public opinion, does, when wholesome and healthy, actually prevent the commission of many sins, which would otherwise leave a stain and a blot. Being a creature of breath, whom we all have a share in forming, she is utterly unreliable, and no substitute for principle; but still her existence (?), when she is of a right kind, often saves the inexperienced from evils they are not able to understand, even when guided by Religion. But when Religion and Mrs. Grundy clash, she becomes that world to which we may not be conformed.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

History of Rome.

August Class List.

First Class.

Vorwärts	40	Clotho	34
Grasshopper	39	Wylmecote	33
Speranza, Bluebell	38	Repullulat	32
Atropos, Moonraker	37	Chrysé, Charissa, Ignavus	31
Water-wagtail, Lisle	36	Fidelia, Claudia	30
Tacitus, Livy, Lachesis	35		

Second Class.

Emu	29	Tortoise, Elpis, Budgerigar, Edelweiss	24
Midge, Carlotta, Countess, Rags	26	Portia	22
White Cat	25	Horatius	21
		Carlo	20

Third Class.

Marius, Mollusk, Fieldfare	18	Neæra, Portia (Ealing)	13
Romola	16	Mabel, Lily	12
Deryn	14		

September Class List.

First Class.

Grasshopper	40	Emu, Stanzerl	34
Robin	38	Vorwärts	33
Tortoise	37	Tacitus, Wylmecote	32
Bluebell, Atropos	36	Ignavus	31
White Cat, Lisle	35	Clotho, Water-wagtail, Marius	30
Lachesis, Repullulat	34		

Second Class.

Fieldfare, Elpis, Livy	29	Charissa, Midge	26
		Carlo	25
Fidelia, Rags, Chrysé	28	Lily, Romola	24
		Countess	23
Claudia, Edelweiss	27	Budgerigar, Carlotta	21

Third Class.

Deryn	18	Mabel	16
Horatius	17	Portia	15

Disqualified. One unsigned.

REMARKS.

29. *Mollusk:* Perseus did not die at Pella, which was the capital of his own kingdom, but at Alba Fucensis, a strong place on the shore of Lake Fucinus, in the country of the Marsi. *Midge:* the captive king of Macedon did not ride in his royal chariot at the Triumph of Æmilius Paullus; he walked behind it. *Marius, Edelweiss, Budgerigar, Repullulat:* the number of bulls sacrificed on that occasion was not twenty, but a hundred and twenty. *Portia:* Paullus could not have sailed 'up the Oricum,' because it was not a river, but a town in Epirus. A timely reference to the map would save many blunders.

30. In 132 B.C. the Roman Provinces were nine in number: Sicilia (B.C. 241), Sardinia and Corsica (B.C. 235), Gallia Cisalpina, called the Province of Ariminum (B.C. 220), Hispania Citerior, and Hispania Ulterior (B.C. 197), Illyricum, Macedonia, Achaia, Africa (B.C. 146). *Atropos* remarks, that though Attalus III., King of Pergamus, had bequeathed his dominions to Rome in 133 B.C., yet they were not formed into the Province of 'Asia' until after the defeat of the usurper Aristonicus, son of Eumenes, about B.C. 126. *Elpis* omits Gallia Cisalpina; *Horatius* omits Illyricum, Achaia, and Africa; *Charissa* omits Macedonia; *Clotho*, Africa; *Marius* omits Sicily, Sardinia, and Corsica, Gallia Cisalpina, and Illyricum.

31. *Water-wagtail* alone mentions the distinction between public and private slaves; the former (*servi publici*) being employed in the care of the temples, and enjoying more independence and better treatment than those belonging to private individuals.

32. Novus Homo, 'a new man,' was a term denoting the first member of a plebeian family who obtained a curule magistracy. His descendants were *nobiles*, or 'men known,' and possessed the right of keeping and displaying a waxen bust of their deceased ancestor, whose forefathers were *ignobiles*, 'men not known.' He himself, the founder of an honourable house belonging to the official nobility of Rome, was neither *ignobilis* nor *nobilis*, but *novus homo;* and his social status was termed *novitas*. The explanations of these terms given by *Emu, Fieldfare, Midge, Repullulat, Carlo, Tortoise, White Cat, Neæra*, are all more or less incorrect.

33. *Deryn:* the three political parties in Rome (B.C. 133–129) were the aristocratic, the democratic, and the moderate; headed, respectively, by Scipio Nasica, Tiberius Gracchus, and Scipio Æmilianus. *Stanzerl* omits Gracchus. *Budgerigar* thinks Nasica was a democrat. *Clotho:* Scipio Æmilianus is supposed to have been murdered, not by one of the aristocratic party, but by the demagogue Carbo, out of revenge for his Conservative speech in the Senate.

34. *Carlotta* mistakes the Calpurnian Law (B.C. 149), which decreed

that all Provincial Magistrates should be tried by a Jury of Senators for the Sempronian Law of Caius Gracchus, which transferred the judicial power from the hands of the Senate, to a body of three hundred persons of the Equestrian order. *Portia:* Drusus did not propose to found 3000 colonies in Italy, but 12 colonies, each composed of 3000 Roman families.

35. *Charissa:* Jugurtha was not the brother, but the cousin of Hiempsal and Adherbal, whose kingdom he usurped. *Horatius* mistakes Metellus for Marcellus. *Mabel:* it was not Gulussa, but Massiva, the son of Gulussa, whom Jugurtha caused to be assassinated at Rome.

36. *Portia:* it was the Teutons (not the Cimbrians) whom Marius defeated at Aquæ Sextiæ (Aix in Provence), and the Cimbrians (not the Teutons) whom he defeated at Vercellæ (Vercelli in Piedmont).

Note.—All students are requested to send their names and addresses, with their *noms de plume* attached, by December 8th, to 'Clio,' under cover to Miss Edith Coleridge, Eldon Lodge, Torquay.

CHURCH HISTORY SOCIETY.

Scheme for 1888.

'Bog Oak' kindly undertakes to continue the Historical Society for Church History. From the month of January, answers should be addressed accordingly.

I. Church of the Apostles.

January.—To the end of the Acts of the Apostles.
February.—Close of the Apostolic Age, including Persecutions of Nero and Domitian.

II. Period of the Persecutions.

March.—From Trajan to the end of the Antonines.
April.—Severus to the death of Decius.
May.—Under Valerian and Aurelian.
June.—The last Great Persecution and Victory of the Church.

III. Ante-Nicene Heresies and Schisms.

July.—Gnostics, Sabellians, Samosatenes.
August.—Manichæans, Montanists, Donatists, Novatians.

IV. Early Writings.

September.—The Apostolic Fathers—St. Irenæus.

October.—The Apologists, and writers of the Alexandrian and African Schools.

November.—Early Liturgies, and Constitution of the Church.

December.—The Church in Britain during this period.

Books recommended, not necessarily all, but one or other: *History of the Church under the Roman Empire*, by the Rev. A. D. Crake (Rivington), 7*s.* 6*d.*; *The Beginnings of the Christian Church*, by W. H. Simcox, M.A. (Rivington), 7*s.* 6*d.*; Smith's *Student's Ecclesiastical History* (Murray), 7*s.* 6*d.*; *Church History*, by the late Bishop of Lincoln. Vol. I. 4*s.* 6*d.* a volume; Dr. Plummer's *Church of the Early Fathers*, 2*s.* 6*d.*; C. M. Yonge's *Eighteen Centuries of Church History* (Walter Smith), 5*s.* Other books of reference will be mentioned from time to time.

'Bog Oak' warns the members that a question may sometimes be asked on the subject of a former month.

The Rules will be the same as for the 'Monthly Packet' Historical Society, which are here recapitulated.

Answers to the questions are to be written *from memory*, after careful study of the subject. Passages transcribed from books are not admissible.

The answers must be written on foolscap paper (one side only), and must not exceed five pages of such paper. They must be signed with a *nom de plume*, and sent on the 1st of the month to 'Bog Oak,' under cover to the Publisher of the 'Monthly Packet.'

N.B.—Papers not conforming to these regulations are liable to be disqualified.

Subscription to the Church History Society, 1*s.* per annum.

Prizes (in books) will be given in proportion to the numbers who join the Society.

'Bog Oak' cannot undertake to return any of the answers.

Notices to Correspondents.

Can any one tell me who St. Spitlhin was? He and St. Manghold seem to be peculiarly Manx Saints. St. Spitlhin has two days in each year kept in his honour: a summer and a winter Feast Day. He shares May 1st with St. Philip and St. James, and November 18th is also dedicated to him. The Manx Calendar for this year can tell nothing more about him. THE MUFFIN MAN.

A. P. C.—There is no connecting link between 'Scenes and Characters' and 'Two Sides of the Shield.'

W.—The best chance would be to ask a secondhand bookseller to look out.

Ono asks, where to find a little poem called, 'Little Daisy's Faith,' beginning—

'Down in de bright, deen meadow,
De pittie daises home.'

It was published many years ago in a magazine, 'The British Juvenile,' but I cannot refer to the date.

MADAM,

It is not often that any mention of the Scottish Church, its work, and its needs, appears in your pages; sometimes it seems to be a little ignored by its larger and more prosperous sister in the south. Struggle is still the keynote of our existence, but we are at least no longer that 'shadow of a shade' which, some half a century ago, the Scottish Episcopal Church might too justly have been called; its growth, though slow, is sure and stedfast, all the more for difficulties encountered, and often overcome. One unmistakable sign of progress which later years have brought is the largely increased number of *spiritual* and *charitable* agencies in the Church; Sisterhoods, Guilds, Confraternities, and Societies, each with its own special objects and rules. Then, too, there are Homes for Penitents, and Orphans; for those who have fallen, or are in danger of falling, as well as others for the Aged and Incurable. It is for one of the latter that I ask your permission to plead in the 'Monthly Packet,' not for aid in money, but to make known its existence, and if possible, to awaken some interest and sympathy on its behalf, for it *has* needs, although we do not beg. Perhaps some of your readers who are endowed with pensioners, proverbially a long-lived race, might be glad to hear of a Home, where they could be comfortably cared for at a moderate cost. The Hospital for Aged and Incurable Women, of which I write, is in connection with All Saints' Church in Edinburgh, and under the charge of All Saints' Sisters, a branch of the Community from Margaret Street. It is intended for ten patients, answering to the description of aged or incurable, very often they are both. The class from which they chiefly come is that of respectable servants, who are paid for by their former employers; but during the ten years the Home has been open, many others have